PRUSSIAN SOCIALISM

AND OTHER ESSAYS

OSWALD SPENGLER

Prussian Socialism & Other Essays

by Oswald Spengler

Annotated and Introduced by

K R Bolton

Prussian Socialism & Other Essays

by Oswald Spengler

Annotated and Introduced by K R Bolton

Copyright © 2018 Black House Publishing Ltd

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form by any electronic or mechanical means including photocopying, recording, or information storage and retrieval without permission in writing from the publisher.

Black House Publishing Ltd
Kemp House
152 City Road
London, United Kingdom
EC1V 2NX

www.blackhousepublishing.com

Email: info@blackhousepublishing.com

Table of Contents

Prussian Socialism

Oswald Spengler An Introduction to His Life and Work

- Early Life
- Decline of the West
- Pessimism?
- German Socialism
- Ruling Circles
- The Sterility of Late Civilization
- Hour of Decision

Political Writings

- Foreword

Prussianism and Socialism

- Introduction
- I. The Revolution
- II. Socialism as a Way of Life
- III. Prussians and Englishmen
- IV. Marx
- V. The International

The Two Faces of Russia and Germany's Eastern Problems

Pessimism?

The German National Character

Introduction to Decline of the Birth Rate by Richard Korherr

Nietzsche And His Century

Tasks of the Nobility

Political Duties of German Youth

Building of the New German Reich

1. The Swamp
2. Civil Service and Personality
3. Education - Breeding or Education?
4. Rights as a Result of Duties
5. The German Currency
6. Against Steuerbschewism
7. Work and Property
8. The World Situation

Is World Peace Possible?

Oswald Spengler

Oswald Spengler An Introduction to His Life and Work

For the Right one might disagree with Oswald Spengler, but one cannot ignore him. Of course, for the Left and orthodox academia, the simplistic option is to ignore him. Spengler continues to pose a challenge, and his great questions of our epoch have yet to be fully answered. But it is essential that the questions are at least asked.

One of the outstanding features of Spengler's morphological theory of history is that it is unfolding before our eyes, at every moment. While saying something is "self-evident" might be – and generally is – a method of claiming one is correct without recourse to evidence, I would challenge anyone who knows at least the fundamentals of Spengler's cultural morphology to look around their own society, perhaps even their own immediate environs, and deny that Spengler is right.

Early Life

Oswald Spengler was born in Harz, Germany, on the 29 May 1880, the only son and eldest of four children, from a paternal line of mine workers – although the father was a postal official when Oswald was born - and a mother with artistic abilities.[1] The father Bernhard, was a loyal Prussian, but politics and reading were not part of the household. Young Spengler, however, at an early age devoured the literature of Goethe and Schiller, and later Shakespeare, Heine, Dostoevsky, et al.[2]

In 1890 the family moved to the university city of Halle, where Oswald received a classical education, studying Latin, Greek, mathematics and the natural sciences. From his mother's side, he developed an affinity for the arts, particularly that of drama, poetry and music.

Even as a 14 year old, while writing plays, stories and poems, Spengler was starting to think about the great issues. Hence, in 1894 he wrote an essay entitled 'Greater Germany: New Order in Europe and the Rest of the World'.[3]

It seems that it was already while a student at the Gymnasium that Spengler first came under the enduring influence of the philosophers Goethe and Nietzsche.[4] In the preface to *The Decline of The West* Spengler acknowledges the debt he owes to them: 'and now, finally, I feel urged to name once more those to whom I owe practically everything: Goethe and Nietzsche. Goethe gave me method, Nietzsche the questioning faculty…'[5]

Spengler entered the University of Munich in 1901, the year of his father's death, and proceeded to Berlin and to Halle. His main courses of study remained the Classical cultures, mathematics and the physical sciences. At Halle he prepared his doctoral dissertation on the Greek philosopher Heraclitus, receiving his Doctorate in 1904. He wrote a secondary dissertation required for becoming a High School teacher. The subject was 'The Development of the Organ of Sight in the Higher Realms of the Animal Kingdom'.[6]

He taught mathematics, physical sciences, history and German

literature at Saarbrücken, Düsseldorf and Hamburg. He was a good teacher, whose style, according to former students, was both lively and ‘intuitive’.[7] However, in 1910, coming into an inheritance from his mother, he left the profession and started his life as an independent scholar, settling in Munich in 1911.[8]

Decline of the West

Here Spengler started to write a book of observations on the political situation, to be entitled *Conservative and Liberal*. However, this developed far beyond the original intention, and became *The Decline of The West*. The First World War confirmed his analysis. He lived in reduced circumstances due to losses of investments, working by candlelight in cheap lodgings, and writing as a 'cultural adviser' for the press.[9]

Despite the war time hardships by 1917 the first volume of his philosophical masterpiece, 'Form and Actuality', was ready, and was published the following year.[10] The volume was an immediate success.

Professional historians were offended by the presumptuousness of Spengler – not being a trained historian - offering a work of such magnitude. Yet, Spengler was looking at history from the heights, and not from beneath the quagmire of formal academia. Stimely makes a comment that remains pertinent: "[W]ith regard to the validity of his postulate of rapid Western decline, the contemporary Spenglerian need only say to these critics: Look about you. What do you see?"[11]

To the defeated Germans, *The Decline of The West* put their predicament into world-historical context, and also offered a vision for the future of Western Civilisation as a unified cultural organism. So with such promise, a second, revised edition of *The Decline of The West,* Volume One, was published in 1922, soon followed by the second volume, "Perspectives of World-History."[12]

Despite the professional critics, there were scholars of note who immediately spoke in favour of Spengler. His English translator, Charles Francis Atkinson, writing in the "translator's preface" for the 1926 English edition of *The Decline of the West*, refers to an article by Dr Eduard Meyer, a scholar of ancient history of worldwide repute, in *Deutsche Literaturzeitung* in 1924 in which Meyer, in contrast to what Atkinson calls "the first burst of criticism," "insists upon the fruitfulness of certain of Spengler's ideas."[13] The two remained friends until Meyer's death in 1930.

Spengler also maintained an exchange of ideas with many other scholars in the study of Civilisations. Hans Erich Stier, Professor of Ancient History, assured Spengler that, despite “the original perplexity,” his thought has “exerted a great influence everywhere,” and was being imitated widely by historical scholars.[14]

Pessimism?

Regardless of Spengler's persistent ill-health and long periods of scholarly solitude, he sought to directly influence political events. Despite the criticism of "pessimism" or "fatalism" that continues to be levelled at Spengler, he did not see this in his historical morphology, and one might say that because all mortals are fated to die, one might as well give up without living whatever life's course that might unfold. So it is with Cultures, according to Spengler, and the scholar sought to influence events politically.

Spengler had addressed the misunderstanding of "pessimism" as early as 1921 when he replied to those who saw his outlook as a prophesy of "dreadful catastrophe," writing of *The Decline of The West*: "My title does not imply catastrophe. Perhaps we could eliminate the 'pessimism' without altering the real sense of the title if we were to substitute for 'decline' the word 'fulfilment''…"[15]

It was from Germany, re-imbued with the Prussian élan, from which the 20th century revival of Western Civilisation had to proceed in answer to 19th century English political-economics. However, Spengler was not an agitator, an organiser, a man of party politics or of mass movements. He sought to influence those who might take Germany, and thereby The West, into new directions.

Over the period 1914 to 1917, while engaged in writing *The Decline*, Spengler continued to write other material of a historical-political nature, including an essay, *To the German Nobility*, calling for a monarchist regime and a system of government that would raise a meritocracy, while eschewing parliament as the means by which the newspaper reading public believes that it is politically empowered.[16]

German Socialism

Despite the initial difficulty in finding a publisher, the defeat of Germany garnered *The Decline of The West* much interest in the aftermath of the war, and Spengler suddenly became a widely respected philosopher, receiving the Nietzsche Archives Award in 1919. That year he gave a speech entitled *Prussianism and Socialism*, which was published as a pamphlet under that title, extolling the Prussian ethos of duty to the State as a true form of anti-capitalist "socialism," not only Prussian, but now required for a universal Western resurgence. This Prussian ethical socialism or what we might call Duty, Spengler contrasted with Marxian "socialism," which is nothing other than a mirror image of English economics, aiming to replace one ownership class with another, while maintaining the same 19th century *zeitgeist* of money-thinking.

Prussian and Socialism explicates a number of issues that were also explained in the final chapters of the second volume of *The Decline of The West*, which was not published until 1922; i.e., four years after the publication of volume one. *Prussianism and Socialism*, like other published speeches such as *The Political Duties of German Youth* and *Reconstruction of the German Reich* (both 1924), and Spengler's final book, *The Hour of Decision* (1934), are intended as a practical philosophy to inspire new thinking and prompt action in the political realm, addressed to youth, workers, aristocrats and industrialists. Spengler explained that socialism was not Marxism, and that socialism was the same as the "spirit of Old Prussia."[17]

In the same vein, among the final paragraphs of Volume II of *The Decline of The West*, Spengler concludes with an impassioned appeal. He calls for The West to overthrow the dictature of Money. Spengler defined "Capitalism" as the "money-powers" that see politics and laws as nothing other than the means for personal acquisition. Socialism is "the will to call into life a mighty politico–economic order that transcends all class interests."[18]

Spengler's thinking had a major influence on Otto and Gregor Strasser, luminaries of the North German region of the Nazi party, and while Otto soon went his own way, Gregor, whom Spengler

greatly respected, unsuccessfully sought Spengler's support for the NSDAP.[19]

Ruling Circles

With Spengler's rejection of party politicking, demagoguery and mass movements, and his cultivation of those already in positions of influence or potentially so, within industry, politics and academia, it is apparent that what Spengler was aiming for was a "revolution from above," a shift of perception within ruling circles.

During the 1920s Spengler was widely sought as a lecturer. In 1921 he read a paper on "Philosophical considerations on the economy," organised by his close collaborator and friend, the influential industrialist Paul Reusch,[20] head of Gutehoffnungshütte (Good Hope Mill), a leading mining and engineering firm in the Ruhr, and president of the German Chamber of Commerce. In 1927 Reusch founded the *Ruhrlade*, a covert society, which raised money for conservative parties and sought their unification.

In 1922 Crown Prince William wrote to Spengler in appreciation for the second volume of *The Decline of The West*, which he was "studying with the greatest interest."[21] Spengler's ideas seem to have been of much interest among the deposed Royal Family, and in 1925 for example, the Kaiserine Hermine asked if she could meet Spengler.[22] He had visited Crown Prince William in Holland in 1923.[23]

At this time Spengler had become completely disaffected with Chancellor Stresemann, writing to conservative journalist and author Gerhard von Janson that at his request several newspapers had "started a strong personal polemic against Stresemann," and asking von Janson to launch a campaign in Berlin and the provincial Press. He now started uncharacteristically advocating the formation of a new political party based on elements from the German National Party and the Centrum party, and leaders from agriculture and industry[24] He also sought a vigorous campaign against the Stresemann administration from the German Fatherland Party, regarding the Stresemann party as bargaining with the Socialists to maintain "this dictatorship of business politicians."[25]

With the Hitler-Ludendorff Munich Putsch of November 1923, Spengler felt that his warnings since 1921 that the nationalist

movement should pursue a “reasonable direction” and that there should have been sounder guidance, were validated. He castigated the lack of direction of the “national movement” for not having critiqued the Hitler-Ludendorff movement, while they had nonetheless remained aloof from the NSDAP, Spengler stating, “the tactic of approving silence was tantamount to help.”[26]

Spengler was of course greatly interested in the Hitler case being heard in Munich, his city of residence, in February 1924.[27] He commented to his sister, Hilde Kornhardt, that Ludendorff had “frustrated the arrangements made to prevent secret matters coming out in court,” in regard to the broader Rightist connections of the NSDAP. Another concern was Ludendorff’s anti-Church stance which was alienating Catholics from the Right.[28]

A luminary of the Right much interested in Spengler’s views was the industrialist Alfred Hugenberg, leader of the German National People’s Party. Other important contacts included Seldte, founder of the Stahlhelm paramilitary veterans movement, and the widely read Conservative Revolutionary novelist Ernst Junger.

The Sterility of Late Civilization

In April 1925 Benito Mussolini wrote thanking Spengler for his *Der Staat*, *Die Wirtschaft*, *Neibau des Deuschen Reiches* and *Politische Pflichten des Deuscthen Jugend*, which the Duce assured Spengler he would read 'with great pleasure'.[29] Since 1923 Spengler had noted Mussolini's opposition to French foreign policy, and sought contact with Italian governmental circles.[30] Spengler's view of Mussolini seems ambivalent however, writing to his sister Hilde Kornhardt, while on holiday in Rome in 1929, of Mussolini as the "woolly lamb" who "suns himself in the lustre of beautiful speeches [while] in the background everybody curses."[31] This seems to have reflected Spengler's distrust of mass movements including those on the Right.

Where Spengler's ideas seem to have impacted Mussolini and Italy most distinctly was in the warning that population decline is a symptom of cultural decay. The end of the drama of a civilisation is epitomised by the sterility of civilised man:

> "The last man of the world city no longer wants to live – he may cling to life as an individual, but as a type, as an aggregate, no, for it is a characteristic of this collective existence that it eliminates the terror of death. That which strikes the true peasant with a deep and inexplicable fear, the notion that the family and the name may be extinguished, has now lost its meaning. The continuance of the blood-relationship in the visible world is no longer a duty of the blood, and the destiny of being the last of the line is no longer felt as a doom…"[32]

The peasant is rooted to the soil as a "descendent of his forebears and as the forbear of future descendants." For the "last men", "all this is past and gone."[33] This primeval urge to family-continuity is as strong in the aristocracy as in the peasant, we might add, and Spengler notes that "the prudent limitation of life" was deplored by the more far-sighted of Rome's thinkers and statesmen, who sought unsuccessfully to reverse the process. It is the present population decline of The West that signals more than any other single factor

Spengler's morphology unfolding before us.[34]

It is to this depopulation that Mussolini addressed himself, a primary influence on Fascist population doctrine being Dr Richard Korherr. An expert on population statistics, Korherr is remembered today as the "infamous" author of the *Korherr Report* (1943) on the Jewish populations of Europe, prepared for the SS in his capacity as Inspector of Statistics. We might better appreciate him however as an expert on population decline, who was never a Nazi.[35] The report shows that European Jewry had long undergone a natural population decline, although any such statistics are now interpreted as evidence for genocide. However, Korherr could not be found guilty of any crime even by the post-1945 mass lynching party, and he pursued an academic career in post-War Germany, dying in 1989.

Korherr had contacted Spengler in 1926, addressing him "Highly honoured Master!" He had read *The Decline of The West* in 1920, and had "not been able to escape from its spell." In 1925 he made Spengler's magnum opus the basis of his doctoral thesis, Geburtenrückgang ("Decline of the Birth Rate"), and sought Spengler's permission to dedicate it to him as "the greatest thinker of our time."[36] Spengler replied that having read the thesis he accepted the dedication with his "best thanks," adding: "I will tell you honestly that up to now I have read nothing which has completed and deepened a suggestion in my book into such knowledge and understanding."[37]

In 1927 Korherr had visited Spengler and wrote stating that Spengler had given him the means by which to oppose depopulation: returning to the ethos that marriage means children, and that woman is "regarded in the first instance as a mother." Indeed, such a remedy is clear enough to anyone reading a chapter significantly entitled "The Soul of the City" in *The Decline of The West*:

> "The primary woman, the peasant woman, is mother. The whole vocation towards which she has yearned from childhood is included in that one word. But now emerges the Ibsen woman… Instead of children she has soul-conflicts, marriage is a craft-art for 'mutual understanding'".[38]

Like Spengler, Korherr sought analogies in other Civilisations and found that Confucius gave China the ethos that "the man who dies without descendants receives no social recognition among the living." Western Civilisation therefore needed a "western Confucius." Korherr regarded Spengler as that individual, and anyone lesser as only causing harm.[39]

In 1928, the year of his employment with the Bureau of Statistics, Korherr's work drew the attention of the Italians and he met the Italian General Consul in Munich. Mussolini wished to personally translate Korherr's *Birth Decline* adding his important May 1927 "Ascension Day" speech *Numero come forza* ("Strength in numbers") as a preface along with a preface by Spengler, indicating the importance Spengler attached to Korherr's work.[40] The Italian edition is Regresso delle nascite.

The influence of Korherr and Spengler on Mussolini's ideas regarding population were expressed in the May 1927 speech: Mussolini regarded Italy's declining birth-rate as a symptom of moral decadence, markedly so in the most industrialised cities (Turin, Milan, Genoa), again a Spenglerian theme on the role the city. The National Organisation for the Protection of Motherhood and Infancy (ONMI) would be funded by a new "bachelor tax" which would also give Italy a "demographic jolt."[41]

Despite certain misgivings about Mussolini's demagoguery, Spengler saw in him the precursor of the renascent Caesars who arise in the Late epoch of a Civilisation to overthrow the dictature of Money and pursue a course of grand politics. Mussolini at least was the nearest to such a figure that Spengler would ever see. Spengler had written: "The coming of Caesarism breaks the dictature of money and its political weapon democracy."[42] He hoped that Italian Fascism was the glimmer of something yet to come:

> "All attempts to gather up the content of the future into parties will soon be forgotten. The Fascist formations of this decade will pass into new, unforeseeable forms, and even present-day nationalism will disappear. There remains as a formative power only the warlike, 'Prussian' spirit – everywhere and not in Germany alone. Destiny, once compacted into meaningful forms and great traditions, will

> now proceed to make history in terms of formless individual powers. Caesar's legions are returning to consciousness".[43]

During the mid to late 1920s demands for Spengler as a lecturer remained high, including an invitation to attend the International Philosophical Congress at Cambridge, Massachusetts in September 1926, which he was unable to attend due to financial reasons and pressures of writing.[44]

On 17 July 1927 Spengler suffered a cerebral haemorrhage, which caused continuous ill-health until his death nine years later[45] He did however continue to lecture and to travel about Europe.

That year he addressed the "Patriotic Society," a youth orientated organisation, at the suggestion of businessman Roderick Schlubach, who urged that personalities such as Spengler "come forward and let your warning voice be heard, not in a negative but in a positive sense… we must not be reproached later for having watched the decline of the West without doing anything."[46]

Despite the lasting effects of his stroke Spengler managed to write two major works in the 1930s. *Man and Technics*, published in 1931, foresaw the usurpation of Western technology - a creation of the Faustian soul - by the "coloured world," which would be used in its revolt against The West.[47] In 1932 a collection, *Political Essays*, was published. This brought further appreciation from noteworthy quarters. Albert Schweitzer, was "engrossed" by Spengler's expositions.[48] Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria thought it a "capital idea to have had the essays bound together."[49]

Hour of Decision

1932 opened new opportunities for the destruction of the Weimer Republic. The future was being fought out between Communists, Conservatives, and Nazis.[50] Spengler had always seen the Nationalist Right as lacking, hence his urging the formation of a new National party as early as 1923. His opinion of the Italian Fascists and particularly of Mussolini was altogether more positive, seeing them achieving results. His ideas on race in *The Decline* and elsewhere are antithetical to that of Nazi zoological conceptions,[51] but found a closer affinity in Italian Fascism.

While 1932 was the year in which Spengler was most vehement in his criticism of the Nazis, he nonetheless voted for Hitler in the presidential elections and even hung the swastika flag outside his home. Hitler was still a "fool'," but it was evident by now that the NSDAP was the only party that could realistically achieve German resurgence. Spengler believed that something better might be made of it, stating that "we must not abandon the movement." He had written in 1927 that he had done what he could to thwart the Nazis, referring to his lecture, *The Political Duties of German Youth*,[52] given on the opening day of the court proceedings against Hitler in regard to the Munich Putsch, writing that "I am of the opinion that politics should be based on sober facts and considerations, and not on romanticism of the feelings."[53]

In 1933 Spengler was invited by Dr Hans Freyer (a noted Conservative philosopher with a following especially among youth) on behalf of the Saxon Ministry for Public Education, to a professorship at the University of Leipzig's Chair of Culture and Universal History. Freyer urged him to accept the position as a means of influencing the education of youth.[54] Such a position would have deprived Spengler of his independence, with the added burden of "a great number of administrative duties."[55] What Spengler did propose to Prof. Hartnacke was a conference on "school and education questions," which Hartnacke welcomed "most heartily."[56]

During this first year of Nazi rule, when conservatives were still

in positions of influence, the Conservative-Right was attempting to direct the course of events. Spengler was at the centre of such moves, and had written to Roderick Schlubach in April that he urgently desired to "discuss the new situation," as "great possibilities" were representing themselves, but the Nazis were not the men to "grasp and deal with them."[57] However, many of these Nationalist-conservatives, including Hartnacke, were out of power once the Nazis had consolidated their rule, and Hartnacke, for example, ended up as a High School teacher from 1935.

Spengler's final major work, *The Hour of Decision*, was not published until 1933, after the Nazis had assumed government. In the "Introduction" he states that "no one can have looked forward to the national revolution of this year with greater longing than myself."[58]

> "I shall neither scold nor flatter. I refrain from forming any estimate of those things which are only just coming into being. True valuation of any event is only possible when it has become the remote past, and the *definitive* good or bad results have long been facts: which is to say, when some decades have passed".[59]

Nonetheless, Spengler was not one to back down, and he stated in *The Hour of Decision* that the National Socialists "believe that they can afford to ignore the world or oppose it, and build their castles-in-the-air without creating a possibly silent, but very palpable reaction from abroad."[60]

The Hour of Decision was a great success, and Nazi press attacks only served to increase sales. It was after 150,000 copies were in print that the Nazis forbade mention of Spengler's name and attempts were made to suppress the book. While the measures took effect, the thousands of copies already in circulation exchanged hands, keeping the circulation surreptitiously high.[61]

The Hour of Decision was intended to influence the course of events, and a copy was sent to Hitler in August, Spengler suggesting a meeting with him to discuss the work.[62] While others saw *The Hour of Decision* for what it was, and were not at all optimistic about the Hitler regime, some Nazi efforts were still made to win Spengler over. Goebbels tried to persuade Spengler to write for the National Socialist press,[63] but Spengler declined any such

overtures.[64]

For the next three years Spengler was left alone by the regime, but could not publish an intended second volume of *The Hour of Decision*, and could only prepare notes in the hope that one day he could again be published. In late 1935 he resigned from his long association with the Nietzsche Archive, protesting that Elizabeth Föster-Nietzsche had made the Archive an instrument of the regime.[65]

Spengler's final essay was an answer to a question on world peace put to well-known individuals such as Eleanor Roosevelt and Mahatma Gandhi, by the Hearst magazine, *International-Cosmopolitan*, published in January 1936. Spengler began by stating that the question can only be answered by someone who knows history and the enduring characteristics of humanity. "There is a vast difference, which most people will never comprehend, between viewing future history as it will be and viewing it as one might like it to be… Peace is a desire, war a fact; and history had never paid heed to human desires and ideals." [66]

Spengler explained history in Nietzschean terms as a will-to-power among all healthy life forms, which might take economic, social, political and military shape between individuals, classes, people and nations. Violence is always the ultimate recourse. "Talk of world peace today is heard only among the white peoples, and not among the much more numerous colored races. This is a perilous state of affairs." When individuals talk of peace, their pleas are meaningless, but when entire peoples become pacifistic "it is a symptom of senility."

> "Strong and unspent races are not pacifistic. To adopt such a position is to abandon the future, for the pacifist ideal is a static, terminal condition that is contrary to the basic facts of existence. Should, the white peoples ever succumb to pacifism they will inevitably fall to the colored world, just as Rome succumbed to the Teutons".[67]

In the early morning of 8 May 1936 Spengler died of a heart attack at his Munich apartment. His sisters buried him quietly, with the request that there be no expressions of sympathy.[68] Spengler was buried holding copies of Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and Goethe's *Faust*.[69] His grave is marked with a block of polished black

granite, chosen by Paul Reusch, inscribed in white with “Spengler”: the monument austere, solid, enduring…

---

1 Keith Stimely, “Oswald Spengler: An Introduction to his Life and Ideas,” *The Journal of Historical Review*, Vol. 17, no. 2, March/April 1998, p. 2.

2 Stephen M Borthwick, “Oswald Spengler: A Biography’,” Institute for Oswald Spengler Studies, http://sites.google.com/site/spenglerinstitute/Biography

3 Herbert Brune, “Oswald Spengler,” http://www.hubert-brune.de/spengler.html

4 Keith Stimely, op. cit.

5 Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of The West*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1971, Vol. I, xiv.

6 Keith Stimely, op. cit.

7 Henry Stuart Hughes, *Oswald Spengler: A Critical Estimate*, Transaction Books, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1992, p. 4.

8 Ibid., p. 5.

9 Hubert Brune, op. cit.

10 Keith Stimely, op. cit.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 C F Atkinson, *The Decline of The West,* op. cit., Vol. I, x.

14 Hans Erich Stier to Spengler, 16 May 1926, *Spengler Letters*, George Allen and Unwin, London, pp. 199-200.

15 Spengler, ‘Pessimism?’ *Preussische Jahrbücher*, CLXXXIV, 1921.

16 Herbert Brune, op. cit.

17 Spengler, *Prussianism and Socialism*, “Introduction”.

18 Spengler, *The Decline of The West*, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 506.

19 Gregor Strasser to Spengler, 2 June 1925, *Spengler Letters*, op. cit., p. 181; Gregor Strasser to Spengler, 8 July 1925, p. 183.

20 Herbert Brune, op. cit.

21 Crown Prince William to Spengler, June 1922, *Spengler Letters*, op. cit., p. 110.

22 Klara von Leipzig to Spengler, 15 July 1925, ibid., p. 191.

23 H Stuart Hughes, op. cit., p. 117.

24 Spengler to Gerhard von Janson, *Spengler Letters*, op. cit., pp. 134-135.

25 Spengler to Reinhold Quartz, 30 October 1923, ibid., pp. 139-140.

26 Spengler to Nicholaus Crossman, ibid., pp. 144-145.

27 The trial of Hitler following the abortive Nazi putsch in Munich.

28 Engelbrecht von Kerkerink zu Borg to Spengler, ibid., p. 150. General Ludendorff, the world war luminary, gave early support to Hitler and was involved in the Munich putsch, where his bravery in leading the Nazi column while police opened fire, became legendary. Ludendorff was a "Wotanist" heathen.

29 Mussolini to Spengler, 24 April 1925, *Spengler Letters*, op. cit., p. 180.

30 Spengler to Paul Reusch, 9 June 1923, ibid., pp. 123-124.

31 Ibid., 6 June 1929, p. 245.

32 Spengler, *The Decline of The West*, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 103-104.

33 Ibid.

34 See also Bolton, *The Decline and Fall of Civilisations*, Black House Publishing, London, 2017.

35 R Korherr, *The Richard Korherr Report*, http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/holoprelude/korherr.html

36 Korherr to Spengler, 21 October 1926, *Spengler Letters*, op, cit., p. 203.

37 Spengler to Korherr, 28 October 1926, ibid.

38 Spengler, *The Decline of The West*, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 105.

39 Korherr to Spengler, 30 May 1927, *Spengler Letters*, op. cit., pp. 219-220.

40 Korherr to Spengler, 2 March 1928, ibid., p. 233. Spengler's preface is included below.

41 Carl Ipsen, Dictating Demography: The Problem of Population in Fascist Italy, Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 66.

42 Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 506.

43 Spengler, *The Hour of Decision*, Alfred A Knopf, New York, 1962, p. 230.

44 Oscar von Müller to Spengler, 13 March 1931, *Spengler Letters*, op. cit., p. 254.

45 R Schlubach to Spengler, 6 December 1929, ibid., pp. 248-249.

46 Spengler to Schlubach, ibid., p. 250.

47 Spengler, *Man and Technics: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Life*, European Books Society, London, 1992.

48 Albert Schweitzer to Spengler, 28 November 1932, *Spengler Letters*, op. cit., p. 273.

49 Rupprecht to Spengler, 29 November 1932, ibid., p. 274.

50 Hughes, op, cit., p. 123.

51 Spengler, *The Decline of The West,* op. cit., Vol. II, Chapter V, "Cities and Peoples: (B) People, Races, Tongues."

52 Included below.

53 Spengler to Prof. Andre Fauconnet, 15 March 1927, *Spengler Letters*, op. cit., p. 217.

54 Hans Freyer to Spengler, 15 June 1933, ibid., p. 281.

55 Spengler to Wilhelm Hartnacke, 24 June 1933, ibid., p. 281

56 Hartnacke to Spengler, 1 July 1933, ibid., 282

57 Spengler to Schlubach, 18 April 1933, ibid., p. 280.

58 Spengler, *The Hour of Decision*, op. cit., ix.

59 Ibid., x.

60 Ibid., p. 7.

61 H Stuart Hughes, op. cit., p. 131.

62 Spengler to Hitler, 18 August 1933, *Spengler Letters*, op. cit., p. 284.

63 Goebbels to Spengler, 20 October 1933, ibid., p 289.

64 Spengler to Goebbels, 3 November 1933, ibid., p. 290.

65 Elizabeth Föster-Nietzsche to Spengler, 15 October 1935, ibid., pp. 304-305.

66 The article is included below.

67 Spengler, “Is World Peace possible?,” *Cosmopolitan*, January 1936.

68 H Stuart Hughes, op, cit., p. 136.

69 Stephen M Borthwick, op. cit.

Political Writings

(1933)

The collection of seven of Spengler's essays, published as a volume in 1933. The following foreword to that volume by Spengler outlines his primary political concerns. Four of those essays are included in this volume: *Prussianism and Socialism*, *The Two Faces of Russia and Germany's Eastern Problems*, *Political Duties of German Youth*, *Building of the New German Reich,* the latter two probably rendered in English for the first time.

- § -

Foreword

The seven works presented here[1] contain what I had to say to Germany, especially their political and economic leaders, by their position and state of the world, their tasks and future. These were the years when, after the low point of disgrace, misfortune and dishonourable behaviour, national contemplation began and developed into a movement that has finally become very powerful, not only internally but also abroad.

The two writings *Prussianism and Socialism*, and *Building of the New German Reich*, and the Würzburg Lecture, "Political Duties of German Youth", immediately penetrated into the wider public. The four other lectures were made known through excerpts in the press, three of them also by reprints spread in the circles for which they were intended. They have all been widely read, they have been verbally attacked and, as far as I can see, have had little practical effect.

Nevertheless, or for that very reason, they are in no way obsolete today. They sketch the great problems which are threateningly piled up before this age, and of which today not one is recognised, let alone fully understood or even solved, as no one else has done,

wanted, dared: the fact of the progress of imperialism, the fact of the class struggle, the rise of *Caesarism*, the catastrophic economic catastrophe. I have not misunderstood, or erred in any significant points. The reader is now free to decide. I offered no general, nebulous theory, not a wishful ideology that could be swooned over by the dilettantes, no "optimistic" programme that elegantly ignored the problems and pushed them aside. Rather I offered a picture of the facts and nothing more.

It was hard, inexorable, cruel, but it all depends on whether I was right or wrong. Because it was right, the cry of pessimism arose: I put the facts for which others lacked courage, and perhaps even honesty.

I had seen the situation in 1911, with the Moroccan crisis[2] and the Italian attack on Tripoli, when the world war really started, with both parties making a clear statement, I had the plan to put together my thoughts on Germany under the title *Conservative and Liberal*. I was appalled by the folly of our policy, which calmly accepted the complete containment of Germany, the blindness of all circles who did not believe in a war that had already broken out, the criminal and suicidal optimism that has been on the rise here since 1870, our alleged, in reality long lost position of power, our apparent wealth, which lay only in the shop window. And behind it I saw the inevitable revolution that Metternich and Bismarck had clearly foreseen that revolution was inevitable, and not only in Germany, whether we had come home victorious or vanquished. Today I dare to say that the war, with its consequences for the whole world, and this revolution, were for us the mildest form of the inevitable, and that we continue on the path of our heavy destiny.

So we experienced the dumbest and most cowardly, unethical and unimaginative revolution in world history. Out of disgust and bitterness, in the summer of 1919 *Prussianism and Socialism* was given as the famous description of this revolution, which caused a scream of rage and for which I was never forgiven. From this book the national movement has begun. I traced the deep ethical antagonism between the English and the Prussian view of life: the island that has no state, but instead a society where people are free to undertake private business; and here on the border to the east a state in the strictest sense of the tradition of the knights who

colonised the land.[3] In England, instead of the Authority of the State, that of parliamentarianism. Here instead of economic liberalism, the disciplining of the economy by political authority. The state and the political party are opposites, as are party and authority.[4]

And I showed that Marx, with his theory, belongs to England, that his conception of the class struggle presupposes the conception of labour as a commodity, not as a profession, as the content of life; as goods that are negotiated and made more expensive according to the principles of the Manchester Theory.[5] Marxism is a variant of Manchesterism, capitalism of the lower class, anti-state and English-materialist through and through. That "socialism" is an ethos, not an economic principle, but has not been understood to date in those national circles which took up this slogan. Idiots are still trying to preach "national" communism. Socialism, as I understand it, presupposes a private property.

And I finally showed that Marx's greatest victory over his adversaries consists in the general acceptance of the concepts of employer and employee, in which the claim is made that only one works, the other does not, and that the employer lives off the work of the employee. In a state where everyone works, however, this ethical contradiction does not apply and there is no silent contempt for the work of leadership and of technical skill. But the height, the existence of a national economy, the very existence of executives, depends on the quality of the work of the leaders - and in their annihilation out of ignorance, hatred, and envy there arises today the great danger that threatens the economy of the whole world.

The essay on Russian dates back to 1922.[6] Two months after the lecture, the Treaty of Rapallo contract was signed against the wishes and to the horror of the Chancellor and Foreign Minister, who were busy once again with English and French ministers, at Genoa. This had been the first independent act of German foreign policy for years. The Russians were then and in the future, in every sense, our next problem, but I do not see that anyone else has completely understood the problem until today. We are no longer the leading state in Central Europe, but the border state against Asia. This change in our geopolitical situation holds great potential, but it compels us to look more closely than is customary today, not with the simple formula: for or against Bolshevism. Bolshevism was

identical with Lenin in 1922. With Stalin a decided change occurred. But will this immense mass of people slowly be freed from the intellectual limitations of Western European communism by new rulers, or will it be liberated by the peasantry by a religious awakening? That is the question for the future.[7]

In the essay on new forms of world politics, I tried to develop the idea that France's supremacy - it was the time of the occupation of the Ruhr and of the Dawes Plan - was only artificially and not permanently possible: no new thought, no constructive goal; a tremendous success has fallen in France's lap, which will soon be thoroughly over. Its climax is already behind us: The *Ruhreinmarsch*. In addition, I showed the shift of power from the European "Concert of the Great Powers" into the vast areas of the entire world, the dwindling of the primacy of White peoples, and above all the fundamental change in the form and fact of "governing" : It is not just the replacement of sovereignty by the parties of private interests, but above all the impact of this fact and of the World War on the form of standing armies that have supported the system. I think they have survived since the intrusion of party politics has called into question the authority over these armed masses, and see in the future the emergence of smaller volunteer armies who, out of conviction, have come into the service of a leader. At the same time, in my opinion, the importance of the war fleets and thus of England's ranking has fundamentally changed and diminished. The great lines of power across the continents are coming to the fore. Thus the last form of civilised powers, *Caesarism*, appears on the horizon. This is now called a dictatorship.

On February 26, 1924, I delivered the lecture to the Würzburg students on the political duties of German youth. It was the day on which the high treason trial began against the authors of the Hitler coup in Munich. What I have said here is still valid today with undiminished force. The "young generation" did not understand it. It is the question of whether one can understand it at this age at all, but I hoped for it and still hope today. In this epoch it is questionable whether one can understand what is required at all. Youth in this sense is not one of years, but of judgement and a sense of responsibility. Those who do not have both are always too young for politics. But I saw the great vice of young Germany in full bloom again, as after 1815 : the inability to face reality, but to disguise it

by ideal dreams, by romance, by party theatre with flags, parades and uniforms, and to falsify hard facts by theories and programmes. Enthusiasm is a dangerous dowry on political paths. It is bad for a ship when the crew is intoxicated in the storm. Politics is the opposite of romance, very prosaic, sober and hard. Youth must understand statesmanship and pay attention to learn to outwit their opponents by means and methods that are tough, fine, and calculated.

But I found a disregard for the economic realities that are today a major problem of big politics and that cannot be treated by ideology. And I therefore showed that the decisive change in the economy of the nineteenth century was, on the one hand, brought about by the rule of coal, which completely changed the demographics, nationality, social stratification, and political rank of the leading nations; on the other hand, through the emergence of mobile, homeless finance capital as a result of the rule of shares over work. This speculative form of possession, which does not build on the economic body of a nation, but which attacks its inhabitants, attacks not only the "worker," but industry, the peasantry, the state as a whole. It is childish to declare war on the entrepreneur and the stock exchange man at the same time. This ideology is that of inferior people. It is easy to dream up party programmes. However, the ethical demand of our day is to prepare oneself to be of service to future leaders. But that's different than wanting to have a say. If the crew wants to instruct the general, the army has ceased to exist.

In the *Building of the New German Reich* I summarised what I consider the tasks of future statesmen. Statesmen, not party leaders and masses, for a Third Reich. Above all, to build up the state, the Prussian opposite of the English-parliamentary expression of an island-like national character, the state based on authority, and the moral type of state servant in the sense of Frederick the Great, which today has been lost as a concept.[8] Education, which is today in the most complete decay, must be education for this state; not for a foreign humanism. Rights, I defined as the result of obligations to the state and the nation: the new basic idea of a future right-wing creation, which demands very deep reflection and, I believe, is worthy of a great people. And I finally showed how much Marxism, liberalism, democracy, all non-German ideals, have deliberately

spoiled this.

Here belongs what I have said about *Steubenchivism*,[9] which in its whole terrible danger is still unrecognised today, because one government after the other lives on provisional means and leaves the solution of the problem to the future. Has anyone already understood today what "tax" is, and what has already been destroyed by senseless methods? This includes the destruction of the leading strata not only of the German people by Bolshevism in the form of taxes, which the envy of subordinate classes demanded; but also tax used to confiscate possessions that have been inherited, saved, or acquired, in which the condition for future achievements of economic and cultural natures were preserved. Also the expropriation of homeownership, acquired by the savings of the middle class, through communism by the tax bill, which made every government a thief, because it does not have the courage to think through the facts and draw conclusions.

And finally: today's relationship between world economy and world politics. This was said above all to those who today have the fate of the economy in their hands and live from day to day, instead of grasping the gravity of their task. It must be said again and again: politics comes first in the life of the peoples and the economy is secondary. A healthy economy cannot exist in a country without strong foreign policy leadership. It testifies to a disease of the national body when the relationship is reversed; when economics take precedence over politics. This is the case throughout the world today, but the consequences are before our eyes. The whole danger is that at that time - at a moment when flat optimism imagined as it is today, thought that the economy was "going up again" - no one wanted to see, and that today everyone sees but does not understand, that we are in an economic catastrophe which must be measured not by months but by decades.

That's what I said and wrote during these years, not for the moment, but for the future. I see more sharply than others because I think independently of parties, directions and interests. I foresaw things as they developed organically and fatefully. I see even more ahead, but I feel lonelier than ever, as among people who have been blindfolded so as not to see the collapse of the house while using their hammers. But I repeat again and again that I have only described facts, for people who can think and act in a state-minded

way, and not for romantics.

Munich October 1932

---

1 Prussianism and Socialism, The Two Faces of Russia and Germany's Eastern Problems, Political Duties of German Youth, New Forms of World Politics, Building of the New German Reich, The Relationship Between Business and Taxation since 1750, The Current Relationship Between the World Economy and World Politics.

2 French occupation of Morocco, during which Germany sent a gunboat to protect German interests.

3 Spengler is referring to Prussia, which arose from 'ducal Prussia' whose lands had been settled by German tillers since the 13th century, after having been conquered by the Teutonic Knights.

4 Spengler is contrasting two outlooks: the English and the 'Prussian'. The English is liberal, the Prussian authoritarian. In England economics dominates and controls the parties; in Prussia economics is subordinated to political demands and to duty.

5 The Manchester Theory of Free Trade, the dominant economic theory of England during the Industrial Revolution; the milieu in which Marx thought and wrote.

6 'The Two Faces of Russia And Germany's Eastern Problem,' a speech delivered to businessmen, which is included in this volume.

7 Spengler was prescient in regard to Russia. He early understood that in the underlying dichotomy between the native Russian spirit and the importation of foreign ideologies, both were present in Bolshevism, and there would be a struggle for supremacy within Bolshevism. He saw that Stalin had already moved Russia in a direction away from the foreign.

8 The King as the "First Servant of the Nation."

9 Hidden property taxes. See the essay below: 'Building the New German Reich', part 6: 'Against *Steuerbschewism'*.

Prussianism and Socialism

(1919)

Prussianism and Socialism, based on notes for Volume II of Spengler's *magnum opus*, *The Decline of The West*, remains a very important, albeit overlooked work. Much, perhaps most, of the "Right", even the so-called "Far Right" has long since succumbed to Free Trade capitalism. That was not part of the traditional Right, including Conservativism. The movement that is called the "Conservative Revolution" in Germany, of which Spengler was a principal figure, was acutely aware of the "socialistic" character of Conservatism: of the nation-people-state as a *social organism*; not as economically contending individuals (Liberalism) or classes (Marxism). Conservative socialism was antithetical to Marxism and other forms of class-war "socialism" which shared with English capitalism the same 19th century "spirit of the Age" (*Zeitgeist*) dominated by questions of trade, economics, and the weighing and balancing of all questions like a merchant weighing his gold. England was the leader of this *Zeitgeist*, which remains animated now by the USA, founded on the Puritan sanctification of capitalism. What Spengler called "Prussian socialism", what the anti-Hitler National Socialists Otto and Gregor Strasser, both influenced by Spengler, called "German socialism", and what can also be called "ethical socialism", aims not to expropriate capitalism for another class, but to transcend capitalism; to relegate economic questions to a subordinate position, and to destroy the dictature of Money, which Spengler states in the closing pages of *The Decline of The West*, dominates at the end cycle of a Civilisation. This is why the "Right" remains the only genuine rebellion against capitalism, and why Spengler stated in *The Decline of The West, The Hour of Decision,* and in this essay, that Leftist movements, including the Communists, are controlled by Money.

- § -

Introduction

This essay is based on notes intended for the second volume of *The Decline of The West*. The notes comprise, at least in part, the germinal stage in the development of the entire thesis presented in that work.

The word "socialism" designates the noisiest, if not the most profound, topic of current debate. Everyone is using it. Everyone thinks it means something different. Into this universal catchword everyone injects whatever he loves or hates, fears or desires. Yet no one is aware of the scope and limitations of the word's historical function. Is socialism an instinct, or a planned system? Is it a goal of mankind, or just a temporary condition? Or does the word perhaps refer simply to the demands made by a certain class of society? Is it the same thing as Marxism?

People who aim to change the word continually fall into the error of confusing what ought to be with what shall be. Rare indeed is the vision that can penetrate beyond the tangle and flux of contemporary events. I have yet to find someone who has really understood this German Revolution, who has fathomed its meaning or foreseen its duration. Moments are being mistaken for epochs, next year for the next century, whims for ideas, books for human beings.

Our Marxists show strength only when they are tearing down; when it comes to thinking or acting positively they are helpless. By their actions they are confirming at last that their patriarch was not a creator, but a critic only. His heritage amounts to a collection of abstract ideas, meaningful only to a world of bookworms. His "proletariat" is a purely literary concept, formed and sustained by the written word. It was real only so long as it denied, and did not embody, the actual state of things at any given time. Today we are beginning to realise that Marx was only the stepfather of socialism. Socialism contains elements that are older, stronger, and more fundamental than his critique of society. Such elements existed without him and continued to develop without him, in fact contrary to him. They are not to be found on paper; they are in the blood. And only the blood can decide the future.

But if socialism is not Marxism, then what is it? The answer will be found in these pages.

Some people already have an idea of what it is, but they are so diligently involved with political "standpoints," aims, and blueprints that no one has dared to be sure. When faced with decisions, we have abandoned our former position of firmness and adopted milder, less radical, outmoded attitudes, appealing for support to Rousseau, Adam Smith, and the like. We take steps against Marx, and yet at every step we invoke his name. Meanwhile the time for fashioning ideologies has passed. We latecomers of Western civilisation have become sceptics. We refuse to be further misled by ideological systems. Ideologies are a thing of the previous century. We no longer want ideas and principles, we want ourselves.

Hence we now face the task of liberating German socialism from Marx. I say German socialism, for there is no other. This, too, is one of the truths that no longer lie hidden.

Perhaps no one has mentioned it before, but we Germans are socialists. The others cannot possibly be socialists.

What I am describing here is not just another conciliatory move, not a retreat or an evasion, but a Destiny. It cannot be escaped by closing one's eyes, denying it, fighting it, or fleeing from it; such actions would merely be various ways of fulfilling it. *Ducunt volentemfata, nolentem trahunt*. The spirit of Old Prussia and the socialist attitude, at present driven by brotherly hatred to combat each other, are in fact one and the same.

This is an incontrovertible fact of history, not just a literary figment. The elements that make up history are blood, race – which is created by ideas that are never expressed – and the kind of thought which coordinates the energies of body and mind.

History transcends all mere ideals, doctrines, and logical formulations.

For the work of liberating German socialism from Marx I am counting on those of our young people who are sound enough to ignore worthless political verbiage and scheming, who are capable of grasping what is potent and invincible in our nature, and who are prepared to go forward, come what may. I address myself to the

German youth in whom the spirit of the fathers has taken on vital forms, enabling them to fulfil a Destiny which they feel within themselves, a Destiny which they themselves are. They must be willing to accept obligations despite hardship and poverty; they must possess a Roman pride of service, modesty in the exercise of authority, and the willingness to take on duties readily and without exception rather than demand rights from others. These conditions once met, a silent sense of awareness will unite the individual with the totality. Such potential awareness is our greatest and most sacred asset. It is the heritage of anguished centuries, and it distinguishes us from all other people – us, the youngest and last people of our culture.

It is to these representatives of German youth that I turn. May they understand what the future expects of them. May they be proud to accept the challenge.

I. The Revolution

-1-

No people in history has had a more tragic development than our own. In times of serious crisis all other peoples have fought either for victory or momentary setback; with us the stakes have always been victory or annihilation. Witness our military history from Kolin and Hochkirch to Jena and the Wars of Liberation, when the attempt was made on French soil to win Prussia's allies for Napoleon by proposing partition; to the desperate hour at Nikolsburg when Bismarck contemplated suicide; to Sedan, which just barely staved off a general offensive of the armies poised at our borders by preventing Italy's declaration of war; to the frightful tempest of wars on our entire planet, the first thunderclaps of which have just died away. Only in Frederick the Great's and Bismarck's states was resistance at all feasible.

In all these catastrophes Germans have fought Germans. That it was often tribe against tribe or sovereign against sovereign is significant only for the surface of history. Beneath all these conflicts lay the intense discord that inhabits every German soul, an inner struggle that first erupted ominously in the Gothic age, in the personages of Frederick Barbarossa and Henry the Lion at the time of the Battle of Legnano. Has anyone understood this dichotomy in the German soul? Who has recognized in Martin Luther the reincarnation of the Saxon Duke Widukind? What inscrutable drive was it that made Germans sympathise and fight with Napoleon when, with French blood, he was spreading the English idea on the Continent? What makes us conclude that the riddle of Legnano is profoundly similar to that of Leipzig? Why did Napoleon regard the destruction of the little world of Frederick the Great as his most urgent problem, and in his innermost thoughts as an insoluble one?

Now, in the evening of the Western culture, we can see that the World War is the great contest between the two Germanic ideas, which like all genuine ideas are lived rather than expressed. Following its actual outbreak in the Balkan outpost skirmish of 1912, it first assumed the outward appearance of a conflict between

two great powers, one of which had everybody, the other nobody on its side. It reached a provisional conclusion in the stage of trench warfare and the devastation of huge armies. During this stage a new formula was found for the unresolved inner discord in the German breast. Currently, owing to a nineteenth century habit of overestimating the economic factor, we characterize the conflict by the superficial terms “socialism” and “capitalism.” What is actually taking place behind this verbal facade is the last great struggle of the Faustian soul.

At the moment in question, although the Germans themselves were not aware of it, the Napoleonic riddle made its reappearance. With the goal of destroying this masterpiece of a state, our most genuine and personal creation – so personal that no other people has been able to comprehend or imitate it, hating it instead like everything daemonic and inscrutable – an English army invaded Germany.

-2-

Believe it or not, that is exactly what happened. The lethal blow in this was not necessarily aimed by the preachers of cosmopolitanism or other treacherous elements. It was we ourselves who brought about this calamity – we Germans, with our almost metaphysical will, our stubborn and selfless determination, our honest and enthusiastic patriotism. This will of ours is by its very nature a handy weapon for any external enemy with the practical sense of the English. It is a precarious compound of political ideas and aspiration, one which only the English are really capable of mastering and implementing.

For us, despite all our passion and self-sacrificing zeal, it has led to political dilettantism; its effect on our political existence has been disastrous, poisonous, suicidal. It is our invisible English army, left by Napoleon on German soil after the Battle of Jena.

Our deficient sense of reality, so pronounced as to have the force of a Destiny, has counteracted the other instinct in the German people, and has caused our external history to develop as a steady sequence of dreadful catastrophes. It failed us at the height of the Hohenstaufen period, when the glorious rulers considered themselves exalted above the demands of mundane life, just as it

did in the nineteenth century, giving rise to the provincial philistinism that we have personified as “the German Michel.” *Michelism* is the sum of all our weaknesses: our fundamental displeasure at turns of events that demand attention and response; our urge to criticize at the wrong time; our need for relaxation at the wrong time; our pursuit of ideals instead of immediate action; our precipitate action at times when careful reflection is called for; our *Volk* as a collection of malcontents; our representative assemblies as glorified beer gardens. All these traits are essentially English, but in German caricature. Above all, we cherish our private morsel of freedom and guaranteed security, and we are fond of brandishing it at the precise moments when John Bull, with sure instinct, would conceal it prudently.

July 19, 1917, was the first act in the drama of the German Revolution. Rather than simply a change in leadership, it was, as our enemies could tell by the brutal forms it took, the coup d’etat of the English element in us, which saw its opportunity at just that time. It was not a revolt against the power of an incompetent, but against power in general. Incompetence at the top level? It is nearer to say that these “revolutionaries,” among them not a single true statesman, beheld the mote in the eyes of the men in positions of authority. Did they, at that moment, have anything at all to offer in place of incompetence besides an abstract principle? It was not a popular revolt. The people looked on anxiously and doubtfully, though not without a certain amount of Michel-like sympathy for measures taken against “those at the top.” It was a revolution of the caucus rooms. The term “majority party” does not, in our sense, have anything to do with the greater number of the people; it is the name of a club with two hundred members.

Matthias Erzberger was tactically the most gifted demagogue among them, excelling at scandal mongering, intrigue, and ambush, a virtuoso at the child’s game of overthrowing ministers. He lacked the slightest trace of the English parliamentarian’s gift for statesmanship; all he did was borrow their tricks. He attracted a swarm of nameless opportunists who were after some public office or other. These were the late descendants of the philistine revolution of 1848; for them, political opposition was a *Weltanschauung*.

These were the latter-day Social Democrats, trying to function

without the iron hand of August Bebel. Bebel's acute sense of reality would not have tolerated this shameless spectacle. He would have demanded and achieved a dictatorship either of the Right or the Left. He would have capsized this parliament and put the pacifists and League of Nations zealots before the firing squad.

This, then, was the Storming of the Bastille – aufdeutsch.

Sovereignty of party leaders is an English idea. In order to put it into effect one would have to be an Englishman by instinct and have mastered the English style of conducting public affairs. Mirabeau had this in mind when he said, "The time in which we live is very great; but the people are very small, and as yet I see no one with whom I would care to go aboard ship." In 1917 not one person had the right to repeat this proud, sad statement. This coup d'etat was entirely negative in character. It broke the oppression of political power, it refused to yield to decisions from above, but it lacked the ability to make new decisions. It overthrew the state and replaced it with an oligarchy of party subalterns who regarded opposition as a vocation and responsible government as a presumption. It undermined, shifted, and dismantled everything piece by piece, to the amusement of political opponents and the despair of observers on the inside. It tried out newly gained power on the most important officials like a native chieftain testing a rifle on his slaves. This was the new spirit that prevailed until, in the black hour of final resistance, the state disappeared.

-3-

Following the assault by our English insurgents there came, of necessity, the uprising of the Marxist proletariat in November of 1918. The scene changed from the halls of the Reichstag to the city streets. Encouraged by the mutiny of the "Home Army," the readers of the radical press broke loose, even though they had been abandoned by their leaders, who were wise enough by now to be only half-convinced of their cause. Following the revolution of stupidity came the revolution of vulgarity. Once again it was not the people who initiated action, not even the socialistically trained masses; it was a mob led by the vermin of journalism. The true socialists were still engaged in the final struggle at the military front, or lay in the mass graves of Europe. They had risen up in

1914, and now they were being betrayed.

It was the most senseless act in German history. One looks in vain for anything like it in the history of other countries. A Frenchman would justifiably reject a comparison with 1789 as an insult to his nation.

Was that the great German Revolution?

How drab, how feeble, how utterly void of conviction it all was! Where we expected heroes we found ex-convicts, journalists, deserters roaming about yelling and stealing, drunk with their own importance and impunity, ruling, deposing, brawling, and writing poetry. It is said that such types have sullied every revolution. Perhaps that is true. But in other revolutions the entire people rose up with such elemental force that the dregs simply disappeared. Here it was the dregs alone who went into action. Not a sign of the great mass, forged into unity by a common idea.

The party of August Bebel had militant qualities which distinguished it from the socialism of all other countries: the clattering footsteps of workers' battalions, a calm sense of determination, good discipline, and the courage to die for a transcendent principle. Yet the soul of the party expired when its more intelligent leaders of yesteryear surrendered to the enemy of yesteryear, reactionary philistinism. They did this out of fear of responsibility, out of fear of succeeding in a cause they had championed for forty years. They dreaded the moment when they would have to create reality rather than combat it. When this happened, Marxism and socialism, i.e., class theory and collective instinct, parted ways for the first time. Only the Spartacists retained a modicum of integrity. The smarter ones had lost faith in the dogma, but lacked the courage to break with it openly. Thus we witnessed the spectacle of a working class divorced from the people by a few ideas and doctrines learned by rote. Leaders were actually deserters; followers plodded ahead leaderless; and over on the horizon was a book which the followers had never read and which the leaders had never understood in its proper limitations.

In a revolution the victor is never a single class (the common interpretation of 1789 is false, "bourgeoisie" is just a word). The true victor – and this cannot be repeated often enough – is the blood, the idea become flesh and spirit, a force that drives the

totality onward. The victors of 1789 called themselves the bourgeoisie; but every true Frenchman was then and is today a bourgeois. Every true German is a worker. It is part of his way of life. The Marxists held power, but they gave it up voluntarily; the insurrection came too late for their convictions. The insurrection was a lie.

-4-

Do we know anything at all about revolution? When Bakunin was opposed in his intention to crown the Dresden revolt of 1848 by burning all public buildings, he declared, “The Germans are just too stupid for that,” and went on his way. The indescribable ugliness of our November Days is without precedent. Not one forceful moment, nothing in the least inspiring. Not one great man, no enduring words, no incisive actions; only pettiness, loathsomeness, and folly. No, we are not revolutionaries. No emergency, no party, no press can stir up an anarchic tempest having the same force as that exhibited in the name of order in 1813, 1870, and 1914. This revolution seemed to everyone, except for a handful of fools and opportunists, like the collapse of a building, perhaps most of all to the socialist leaders themselves. It was a unique situation: they had won suddenly what they had coveted for forty years, absolute power – and they were miserable. The same soldiers who fought as heroes for four years under the black-white-red banner turned spineless and impotent under the red flag. This revolution did not impart fortitude to its adherents; it robbed them of it.

The classical site of Western European revolutions is France. The resounding of momentous phrases, streams of blood in the streets, la sainte guillotine, terrifying nights of conflagration, heroic death at the barricades, orgies of the crazed masses – all these things point up the sadistic mentality of this race. The whole repertoire of symbolic words and deeds for the perfect revolution originated in Paris, and we only gave a bad imitation of them. The French showed us in 1871 what a proletarian insurrection looks like in the face of enemy artillery. And this was surely not the only time.

The Englishman attempts to persuade the domestic enemy of the weakness of his position. If he is unsuccessful he simply takes sword or pistol in hand and, eschewing revolutionary melodrama, presents

him with the choice. He decapitates his king, for instinct tells him that this is required as a symbol. For him, such a gesture is a sermon without words. The Frenchman does such things out of revanche, for the sheer pleasure of watching a bloody scene. He is titillated by the clever idea of lopping off the royal head. Without human heads impaled on spikes, aristocrats hanging from lampposts, and priests slaughtered by housewives, he would be frustrated. He does not care at all about the outcome of such days of grandeur. The Englishman desires the goal, the Frenchman desires the means.

What was our desire? All that we accomplished was a travesty of both techniques. We produced pedants, schoolboys, and gossips in the Paulskirche and in Weimar, petty demonstrations in the streets, and in the background a nation looking on with faint interest. A real revolution must involve the whole people: one outcry, one brazen act, one rage, one goal.

The real German Socialist Revolution took place in 1914. It transpired in legitimate and military fashion. In its true significance, scarcely comprehensible to the average person, it will gradually overshadow the sordid events of 1918 and make them appear as phases in the long-range development of the Revolution itself. And yet popular historical opinion will not give prominence to this Revolution, but to the November uprising. It is easy to imagine how, under ideal conditions, a true proletarian revolution might have started at the time. This only indicates the glaring cowardice and mediocrity of those who declared themselves in support of the proletarian cause. Great revolutions are fought with blood and iron. What might the great popular leaders, the Independents and the Jacobins, have done in this situation? And what did the Marxists do? They had the power, they could have done just about anything. One great man from the ranks of the people could have had the entire nation behind him. Yet never has a mass movement been more thoroughly ruined by the incompetence of its leaders and their lieutenants.

The Jacobins were prepared to sacrifice everything because they sacrificed themselves: “Marcher volontiers, les pieds dans le sang et dans les larmes” as Saint-Just put it. They did battle against the majority within the nation and against half of Europe at the front. They swept everything along with them. They created armies out of

nothing. They won victories without officers or weapons. If only their parrot-like German imitators had unfurled the red banner at the front and declared war to the death against capitalism! If only they had set an example by staking their lives in the struggle! Had they made this choice they would not only have breathed life into the mortally exhausted army and its officers, they would have won over the entire West as well. It was a moment when personal sacrifice would have spelled victory.

But they ducked out. Instead of stepping to the command of red legions they grabbed top positions in well-salaried workers' Soviets. Instead of winning the battle against capitalism they conquered window panes and liberated stores of provisions and state treasuries. Instead of selling their lives they sold their uniforms. This revolution failed from cowardice. Now it is too late. We shall never recover what was lost during the Armistice. The mass ideal degenerated into a series of corrupt wage deals, forced through without reciprocal promises. In their valour these "revolutionaries" did not shrink from sponging on the rest of the people, on the farmers, the civil servants, and the intellectuals.

Instead of initiating action they bellowed the slogans "soviet," "dictatorship," and "republic" so often that within two years' time they will have become a laughing-stock. The only "action' that occurred was the overthrow of the monarchy. And yet a republican form of government has nothing at all to do with socialism.

All this proves that, as opposed to the rest of the people (and it turns out that it is opposed to them), the "fourth estate," which is actually a negative concept, is incapable of constructive action. It proves that if this was indeed the socialist revolution, then the proletariat cannot be its most effective champion. No matter what is yet to ensue, this question is now definitely resolved. The social class trained by August Bebel for the decisive struggle has failed right down the line. And it has failed for all time, because momentum of this sort, once lost, can never be regained. A grand passion cannot be replaced by embitterment. From now on let there be no illusions among the advocates of the erstwhile "socialist" program; they have completely alienated the valuable element of the working class. Formerly the leaders of a great movement, they will one day find themselves as big-mouthed heroes of street brawls in the suburbs. From the sublime to the ridiculous is but one step.

Such, then, was the great German Revolution, the event that was heralded in poetry and song for generations. It was a spectacle of such fearful irony that decades must pass before the Germans can see it in its true light: a revolution that succeeded in overthrowing its own aims, and that now aims for something else – without knowing exactly what.

Let us imagine for the moment that we are citizens of the future looking back on these three revolutions: the honorable English Revolution, the superb French Revolution, and the absurd German Revolution. We can conclude that through these events the three latest peoples of the Western world attempted to achieve the three ideal forms of existence enunciated in the famous motto: “Liberty, equality, and brotherhood.” These ideals appear in the political programs of liberal parliamentarism, social democracy, and authoritarian socialism. In each case it seemed that such ideals were a new concept for these peoples, whereas in reality the ideals were the purest and most extreme expression of their wholly personal and immutable patterns of life.

In antiquity the purpose of revolutions was to establish the basis on which a stable existence was at all feasible. Despite the outward signs of passionate struggle that accompanied them, they were all defensive actions. No one, from Cleon on down to Spartacus, ever thought to look beyond the immediate crisis toward a general reordering of ancient society. The three great Western revolutions, on the other hand, have dealt essentially with a problem of power: Is the will of the individual to be subjected to the common will, or vice versa? Once a decision was reached, the intention was to force it on the whole world.

English instinct decided that power belongs to the individual. Life is a free-for-all, every man for himself, the stronger man wins. The English opted for liberalism and the belief in the inequality of men. The state was to exist no longer; everyone was to fight his own battles, for in the end it would benefit all.

The instinct of the French decided that all men are equal, and hence power should belong to no one. There was to be no such things as subordination, and therefore no order and no state – in

fact, nothing at all. This theoretical ideal of anarchy has, in practice, been periodically reaffirmed (in 1799, 1851, 1871, and 1918) by the despotic rule of generals and presidents.

Both of these systems may be called democracy, but for very different reasons. Neither had anything to do with class struggle in the Marxist sense. The English Revolution, which produced the type of citizen who leads his life in private and is responsible only to himself, directed its action against the state rather than the estates. The secular and religious powers that sustained the state were abolished, and in their place came a reliance on the advantages of England's insular location. The estates still exist today, recognized and respected by all – even by the workers, who honour them instinctively.

Only the French Revolution was a genuine "class conflict," but it was a conflict between social rather than economic ranks. In France the privileged few were integrated with the homogenous mass of the people, the bourgeoisie.

In contrast to these two, the German Revolution grew out of a theory. German, or more precisely, Prussian instinct declares that power belongs to the totality. The individual serves the totality, which is sovereign. The king, as Frederick the Great maintained, is only the first servant of his people. Each citizen is assigned his place in the totality. He receives orders and obeys them. This is authoritarian socialism as we have known it since the eighteenth century. It is essentially non-liberal and antidemocratic, at least when compared with English liberalism and French democracy. But it is also clear that the Prussian instinct is anti-revolutionary. The task of transposing the state organism from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century – a process that might be described as liberal and democratic but in an entirely different, Prussian sense – was one for organizational talent.

But the radical theoretical mind invented a "fourth estate" out of a portion of the citizenry, which was senseless in a country of farmers and civil servants. Theory gave the name "third estate" to the most numerous segment of the population, the one containing a motley variety of occupations and professions, thus singling it out as an element in a "class conflict." And finally, it made the socialist idea a prerogative of the "fourth estate."

With these abstractions in mind the theorists set out in November, 1918, to achieve what had actually been in existence for a long time. Beclouded by slogans, they failed to apprehend the actual state of affairs, and in the end succeeded in destroying it. They not only ruined the state, they also crushed Bebel's party, the masterpiece of a truly socialist man of action, a genuinely authoritarian and militant organisation, the best weapon the workers had in their battle to infuse the state with the spirit of the new century.

That is what makes this revolution so desperately comical. It succeeded admirably in setting its own house on fire. What the German people had promised itself in 1914; what it had already begun to bring about, slowly and dispassionately; what millions of men had died for on the battlefields – all this was denied and destroyed. And then embarrassment set in. Nobody knew how to convey the impression that an active revolution was actually taking place. Such an explanation was urgent, because the workers, who had expected something quite different, viewed their leaders with increasing distrust. The constant barking of slogans into thin air was no solution.

-6-

And so the German *Michel*, that inveterate liberal, set the overturned throne aright and seated himself upon it. The guileless heir to this revolutionary prank, intensely anti-socialist by nature, he was equally repelled by Conservatives and Spartacists and fearful that these groups might one day discover what they have in common. He was Schiller's Karl Moor in an easy chair, tolerant of all political faiths including the most questionable ones – provided that they upheld the republican-parliamentarian-democratic principle, provided that they were long on talk and short on action, provided that they kept out of his sight such authoritarian qualities as resoluteness, audacity, and disciplined obedience. To protect himself, our good friend *Michel* beckoned to the one outstanding personality of the November episode, and it is not insignificant that this man was a dyed-in-the-wool soldier. Whereupon *Michel* immediately reverted to his old distrust of the military spirit, without which the Weimar farce would have ended swiftly.

This sorry display of ignorance, incompetence, weakness, and indignity should suffice to discredit parliamentarism forever in Germany. Under the black-red-yellow banner, which has now become the everlasting symbol of folly, we witnessed a repetition of all the stupidities of 1848, when politics was likewise not action but empty talk and theorizing. The liberal of 1917 was in his glory. He had his armistice, his League of Nations, his peace, and his government. *Michel* doffed his cap with a smile in the expectation that John Bull would be "simply splendid." But his smile turned to tears as he signed the papers: John Bull was using a crazed Frenchman as his business manager.

In the heart of the German people Weimar is doomed. It is not even a laughing matter. The ratification of the Constitution has been greeted by absolute indifference. Its authors thought that the dawn of parliamentarism had arrived, whereas even in England it is rapidly growing dusk. Such as it is, the English system presupposes the presence of strong personalities, distributed between two very old, mutually complementary political groups. In Weimar, where there was a desperate lack of strong personalities, it was believed that political opposition was the very hallmark of the parliamentarian system. And so they dutifully started opposing a government that no longer existed. It was like a schoolroom when the teacher is away.

The future will most certainly look on this episode with profound contempt. The year 1919 is the nadir of German dignity. The Frankfurt Paulskirche contained honest fools and academicians, altogether a comical collection of eggheads. In Weimar one had the feeling that clever operators were behind the scenes. It makes no difference whether the acting politicians were conspirators themselves or just the dupes of conspirators; these parties confused the fatherland all too often with their own advantage. What we now have is a pre-Thermidor Directoire. Woe to us if we have to make up for the phase we passed over!

It is equally certain that the dismal comedy of this counterfeit revolution will end. The outside world is preparing for a new phase of the World War. Things happen fast these days. In our National Assembly, a degenerate Reichstag, the politicians are using the ruins of our demolished state to build a makeshift shelter. Soon the only activities there will be graft and fraudulent dealings in salaries,

merchandise, and official positions.

Meanwhile, other people are beginning to think differently about the events of last year. They are comparing what is now being constructed with what was there previously. They are beginning to understand that, in reality, a people can never choose between different types of government. It can choose the outer trappings of government, but not the essential thing, the spirit of government – even though public opinion constantly confuses the two. What gets written into a constitution is never essential. The important thing is how the instinct of the people interprets it. The English Parliament governs according to unwritten and, in part, quite undemocratic laws that have evolved through long practice. And that is precisely why it is so successful.

-7-

Make no mistake, the revolution is not yet ended. No matter how you interpret it, as senseless or significant, as a failure or as an auspicious beginning, as the prelude to a world revolution or merely as a mob uprising in a single country, the fact remains that we are in the midst of a crisis. And like everything organic, like every disease, this crisis will follow a more or less typical course that cannot be influenced by artificial means. In the light of this fact such ethical distinctions as “just cause” and “treachery” are quite worthless. From now on, revolutionaries and counterrevolutionaries alike must have expert knowledge of human nature; they must be able to grasp and exploit the immediate situation with deliberateness and sobriety. Instead of practicing the ancient art of diplomatic psychology on diplomats and sovereigns, they must learn to apply it to the mass mind, which responds much more rapidly to errors of tact.

Popular leaders, even those of mediocre intelligence, have an infallible knack for this sort of thing. The lack of instinct shown by our present political leaders is perhaps best explained by the typical German thoroughness of their “theoretical” training. The truly popular leader must have an absolutely accurate sense of the duration, the tempo, the rhythm, the crescendo and decrescendo of each phase of the situation; one false move and he will lose all control. What is more, he must know exactly which factors he can

control, and which ones he must allow to run their course, waiting out the time when he can exploit them in a broader context or, by skilful manipulation, steer them in the direction he deems necessary. Great revolutionaries have always possessed the tactical know-how of great generals. For an army, the prevailing mood of a single hour can spell victory or defeat.

To the theoretical mind, the most important part of a revolution is its beginning, when forces are arrayed in clear and definite opposition to each other. The skeptical mind prefers, however, to study the final phase of a revolution, for it has much greater significance and is psychologically more instructive. Matters of state have never been so complicated as they are today. The outbreak of the German Revolution was at the same time the betrayal of our nation to the enemy. As a result, our emotional attitude toward Marxism differs radically from that of all other countries. In 1792, nation and revolution were one and the same; in 1919, they are opposites. The English Revolution confined itself to an island, and the French insurgents, owing to their bravery in the field, were able to keep the situation in hand at all times. In our own revolution, each new phase occurs under pressure of foreign designs. Paris, London, and New York are all involved – not with their labour movements but with their armies, which they will send against us should the German Revolution take on undesirable forms. That is the way our Marxists wanted it, and they had better be prepared to take the consequences. Besides the Spartacists' hand grenades and the machine guns of the Reichswehr, we have the French Army of Occupation and the English fleet to reckon with.

Our newspapers are full of "heroic" bolshevist pronouncements. Every day we can take our pick among massacres of Western capitalists – on the editorial pages. Journalism is no substitute for a true revolutionary front line, backed up by heavy artillery. The longer they preach about world revolution the less threatening it becomes. There is mostly anger, and very little confidence, in the revolutionary talk we hear and read these days. It should be pointed out that not even the Russian revolutionaries made cowardice in the face of the enemy a cardinal point in their program. And it must not be forgotten that many of those who participated in the November insurrection did so, not out of enthusiasm for this or that political solution, but because they were hungry and desperate, because

their nerves could no longer stand the strain. The decisions reached at Versailles have caused the state of war to continue. But how much longer can the psychological effect of those decisions be an aid, rather than an obstacle, to the designs of the Marxists?

The general strike has outlived its usefulness as a weapon. The past year has dissipated whatever energies the Marxist movement had to start with, and at this point revitalization is out of the question. The absurd goings-on in the National Assembly are bound to produce nothing but contempt for the parliamentary idea.

There comes a time in every revolution when the people will settle for peace and domestic order at any price, when no revolutionary minority can persuade them, not even with the most drastic methods, to make fundamental political decisions. When this point is reached the revolution has virtually come to an end, and no one has the power to avoid its effects or postpone them. We need only compare the actual number of votes cast in the Jacobin plebiscite with those cast at the installation of Bonaparte as first consul to see that the French people had finally had enough of the revolution. We are now rapidly approaching this terminal point in the German Revolution. And the patience of the German people will be exhausted even more quickly.

Nevertheless, it is not only the confirmed advocates of radical change who are in danger of committing errors; their equally confirmed opponents can make mistakes just as easily. A strong but indeterminate feeling of disappointment is still a long way from the actual decision to capitulate. The sense of political failure that is widespread in the German people today is like an open wound that is sensitive to the touch. If the opposition were to make the slightest attempt to end the revolution by violence, they would release in the people an irresistible wave of bitterness and fury such as the radicals themselves are no longer capable of arousing. We would experience a protest of contagious force, a sudden quickening of the popular mood which resolute leaders could exploit for action of a very drastic sort. While it is true that such a development would not affect the duration or essential meaning of historical events, it would nonetheless alter their form and intensity to a decisive degree. Things could get very bloody.

We have now reached a crucial stage in this revolution, a time

when the inscrutable mass mind could confuse even the most knowledgeable observers by giving a surprise twist to the course of events, as it has in previous great revolutions. Does the tense silence that prevails in some quarters of our country indicate the presence of an indomitable will? Is the irritable clamouring we hear from other quarters to be interpreted as a growing awareness of final defeat? Is it too late for the insurgents to take action? Too early for the opposition?

It is common knowledge that certain political structures which seem invincible at the moment can, after two years' time, fall of their own weight. That was true in 1918 and will again be true, though with a nearly opposite effect, in the near future. Yesterday's courtiers can be the regicides of today, and today's regicides, the princes of the future. In such times no one can be sure of how long his convictions can endure.

But to what unit of time should we now adapt our thinking? Should we start thinking in months, or in years? The tempo and duration of the German Revolution were determined by the time and manner in which it began. No one may have knowledge of these factors, yet they exist and they operate with the inevitability of Destiny. Whoever tries to interfere with them will perish. The Girondists perished because they thought that the climax of the revolution was behind them; Babeuf met his fate because he believed that the climax was yet to come. The intrinsic nature of the Revolution would remain intact even if new wars were to break out, even if a great personality were to make his appearance. Such occurrences might cause a sudden and complete change in the historical appearance of the German Revolution – which is all that matters to the ordinary observer – but their true function would be to confirm its deeper and more essential significance. A great man is one who understands the spirit of his time, who is himself the incarnation of that spirit. He does not come to destroy, but to fulfil it.

Let us now investigate the origins of the spirit of German socialism.

II. Socialism as a Way of Life

-8-

Six thousand years of higher human history lie before us. Amid the great mass of persons and events that have appeared on the entire planet we can distinguish those elements that make up history in the proper sense: the spectacle and destiny of the great cultures. They appear to the eye of the observer as formal entities having a basically similar structure, as visible manifestations of powerful forces of the human soul, as the real and vital expressions of the most profound mysteries of human evolution.

In each culture there resides an immutable principle which gives it its particular features of belief, thought, feeling, and action, of government, art, and social structure. This same principle has brought forth what we know as the various “types” of man: the Classical, Indie, Chinese, and Western. Each has had its own unity of instinct and consciousness, its own “race” in the spiritual sense.

Moreover, each of these cultural units is complete in itself and independent of all others. Traditional historiography has been interested solely in historical influences on cultures, not realizing that such influences are in fact of the most superficial kind. Inwardly, all cultures remain just what they are. They arise and flourish on Nile and Euphrates, Ganges and Hwang Ho, in the Semitic Desert, on the shores of the Aegean, or on the river-lined plains of Northern Europe. Each culture gathers together the human beings in its locality and breeds them to form a people; a people, in other words, is not the creator but the creature of its culture. Dorians and Ionians, Hellenes and Etrusco-Romans, the peoples of ancient China, Teutons and Latins, Germans and Englishmen – each people has its own peculiar mentality and significance, each stands in passionate contrast to the others. Seen from the outside and compared with foreign cultures, each assumes a unified form: we speak of Classical man, Chinese man, and Western man.

At the base of every culture lies an idea that is expressed by certain words of profound significance. In Chinese culture these

words are tao and li; for the Apollonian Greeks this cultural idea was contained in the world's logos. In the languages of Faustian man the basic cultural idea is expressed by the words "will", "strength," and "space." Faustian man differs from all others in his insatiable will to reach the infinite. He seeks to overcome with his telescope the dimensions of the universe, and the dimensions of the earth with his wires and iron tracks. With his machines he sets out to conquer nature. He uses his historical thinking to take hold of the past and integrate it into his own existence under the name of "world history." With his long-range weapons he seeks to subdue the entire planet, including the remains of all older cultures, forcing them to conform to his own way of life.

How long, we may well ask, will this striving continue? After a certain number of centuries each culture is transformed into a civilisation. What was formerly alive becomes rigid and cold. Expansiveness of mind and spirit is replaced by a lust for expansion in the material world. "Life" in the sense used by Meister Eckart becomes "life" in the political and economic sense; the militant power of ideas becomes imperialism. One sign of the onset of this transformation is the enunciation of ultimate but very earthly ideals; a mood of ripeness, of age and experience begins to take hold within the culture. Socrates, Lao-tse, Rousseau, and Buddha each presaged a downward turn in his respective culture. All of these thinkers are inwardly related. None possessed a genuine metaphysics; each of them was the proponent of practical but terminal ideas and attitudes to which we have applied such comprehensive titles as Buddhism, Stoicism, and socialism.

-9-

Socialism, then, is not an instinct of dark primeval origin like the instincts that found expression in the style of Gothic cathedrals, in the lordly mien of great emperors and popes, or in the founding of the Spanish and British empires. It is, rather, a political, social, and economic instinct of realistically-minded peoples, and as such it is a product of one stage of our civilisation – not of our culture, which came to an end around 1800.

And yet this instinct, totally directed to the outside world, still nourishes the old Faustian will to power and the infinite; now it has

become the direful will to absolute domination of the world in the military, economic, and intellectual sense. It can be felt in the historical fact of the World War and in the concept of a world revolution, the idea of forging the swarming multitudes of humanity into a single whole. The imperialism of Babylon aimed only at control of the Near East, while that of the Indie people was limited to India itself; Greek and Roman imperialism was bounded by Britain, Mesopotamia, and the Sahara, and China's empire extended no further than the Caspian Sea. Modern imperialism, on the other hand, aims at possessing the entire globe. We recognise no borders or limits at all. By means of a new *Volkerwanderung* we have made America a part of Western Europe. We have constructed on every continent our special kind of cities, and have subjected the native populations to our own way of life and thought. Such activity is the highest possible expression of our dynamic sense of world power. What we believe, what we desire, is meant to be binding on all. And since life has come to mean for us external, political, social, and economic life, all must submit to our political, social, and economic ideal, or perish.

This drive toward universal domination is what I have termed "modern socialism." We are now growing more and more conscious of its presence. It is what we of the Western world have in common. It is active in every human being from Warsaw to San Francisco, and each of our peoples is fascinated by the spell of its promises and potentialities.

Yet we are the only peoples who partake of it. Classical, Chinese, or Russian socialism in this sense does not exist. Still, at the base of this powerful collective consciousness there is inner hostility and contradiction. Concealed within the soul of every culture is a single, irreparable fissure. The history of each culture is a never-ending conflict between peoples, classes, individuals, or tendencies within an individual – it is always the same awesome problem.

As soon as one historical element makes its appearance it immediately calls forth an opposing element. Nietzsche has identified for us the great dichotomy of Classical life which reappeared again and again in various forms: Apollo and Dionysus, Stoics and Epicureans, Sparta and Athens, senate and plebs, tribunate and patriciate. With Hannibal at Cannae, Epicurean Hellenism stood in opposition to the Rome of the Stoics and

senators. At Philippi, the Spartan element of Rome was defeated by the Athenian element personified by the Caesars. Even in Nero's matricide we can discern a triumph of the Dionysian idea of *panem et circenses* over the Apollonian rectitude of the Roman matrons. Throughout all the epochs of Chinese history, in Chinese life and thought, battles and books, we can perceive the antithesis connected with the names of Confucius and Lao-tse and the untranslatable concepts of li and tao. Similarly, it is one and the same schism in the Faustian soul that has shaped our destiny through the Gothic and Renaissance, Potsdam and Versailles, Kant and Rousseau, socialism and anarchism, and which will go on shaping it right up to our last days.

Yet even so, this Destiny is unified. The discord and antithesis serve a higher reality. Epicureanism is but another form of Stoicism; Aeschylus brought together Apollo and Dionysus; Caesar combined senate and plebs; the Taoism of Lao-tse helped to create Confucianist China. And the Western peoples whose instinct is anarchic are themselves truly socialistic in the larger Faustian sense.

III. Prussians and Englishmen

-10-

Three Western peoples have embodied socialism in this larger sense: Spain, England, and Prussia. Florence and Paris were the sources of the anarchic antithesis to socialism: Italy and France. The conflict between these two dispositions toward life and the world forms the basic outline of what we call modern world history.

The Gothic spirit, with its tremendous urge to break through all limitations, manifested itself in the figures of the great emperors and popes, in the Crusades, the imposing cathedrals, the institution of knighthood, and the religious orders. In the fifteenth century the soul of Florence rose up to oppose this spirit. What we call the Renaissance is the anti-Gothic principle of artistic limitation and graceful thinking. Characteristic of its narrower focus are the myriad robber-principalities, republics, and condottieri that sprang up in the Italy of the time, the small-scale, opportunistic political scheming reflected in Machiavelli's classic work, and the modesty with which even the Vatican pursued its plans for hegemony. It was a protest against the depth and breadth of Faustian universalism. The Italian people, as a type, had its origin in Florence.

The second appearance of the antithetical element occurred in France during the *grand siecle*. There we find Racine assuming an artistic role analogous to that of Raphael; the esprit of the Parisian salons recaptured the atmosphere of the Medici palace; the policy of the Borgia and Sforza clans found its continuation in the predatory wars of Louis XIV; and this king's famous dictum, "L'etat c'est moi," is an expression of the Renaissance ideal of the free and masterful personality. France and Italy are truly close relatives.

Between the birth dates of these two peoples came Spain's outstanding century, dating from the Sack of Rome (1527), when the Spanish spirit conquered the spirit of the Renaissance, to the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659), when Spain was finally forced to yield to France. This episode marked the last grand flourishing of the Gothic principle. The Castilian grandee is the last of the feudal

knights (Don Quixote, the Spanish Faust!). The Society of Jesus is the final, indeed the only, great institution since the knightly orders established as a weapon against the infidels. The empire founded by the Spanish Habsburgs was the realisation of the Hohenstaufen ideal, just as the Council of Trent realised the ideal of the papacy.

With the advent of the Spanish-Gothic spirit of the Baroque, a severe and impressive style of living spread throughout the Western European world. The Spaniard sensed within himself a great mission – not an "ego" but an "id." He was either a soldier or a priest. He served either God or his king. In fact, it was not until the rise of Prussia that such a stringent and submissive ideal was again embraced. Prussians ought to have recognised familiar traits of character in the Duke of Alba, the man with an incomparable sense of duty. The Spanish and the Prussians are the only peoples who rose up against Napoleon. What we call the modern state was created in the Escorial. All the techniques of modern statesmanship had their origin in Madrid: national and dynastic politics on the grand scale, cabinet diplomacy, the use of war as a deliberate and calculated move in the intricate chess game of grand strategy. Bismarck was the last of the Spanish-style statesmen.

In Florence and Paris, border disputes sufficed to satisfy the urge for conquest. Leibniz once suggested to Louis XIV that he overrun Egypt – and the King refused. Columbus sought aid for his expedition in both cities – in vain. Since that time Italian and French political thought has centred on such matters as subduing Pisa, securing the Rhine border, reducing the neighbouring country's territory, and humiliating the enemy. How different these petty concerns are from those of imperial Spain! The Spanish spirit was out to conquer the earth and establish an empire that would never see the setting sun. We need only compare the Spanish conquistadores with the condottieri in Italy. It was the Spaniards who first made the entire globe the object of Western-European political planning. Italy itself became a Spanish province. And it is important to understand the spiritual conflict that led to the Sack of Rome: this action put an end to the Renaissance Church. The Spanish-Gothic mentality, which holds sway even today in the Vatican, rose up at that time against the Renaissance Church and the closely related Reformation churches. Since then the idea of world domination have never been put aside. From that moment

on, the spirit of the Italian and French peoples has remained hostile to the Church, though less as a religious institution than as the embodiment of the Spanish concept of universal hegemony. This explains the "Gallic" religious policy pursued by the French kings, by the Revolution, by Napoleon, as well as the anti-clerical attitude of the Italian monarchy. The Church, however, found support in Madrid and Vienna.

Vienna, too, is a creation of the Spanish spirit. Language alone does not make a people. In this instance a people, the Austrian people, was created first by the aura of its court life, then by its clergy, and finally by its nobility. In the process it has alienated itself irrevocably from the rest of the Germans, for a people with firm historical roots can never change, even though it may consider itself from time to time as undergoing change. The Austrian people is Spanish and Habsburg by nature, whether there are living members of the Habsburg family or not. Austrian thinkers may deny this, but Austrian instinct confirms it. Spanish Germany, represented by the Imperial Court, met its defeat in 1648 at the hands of French Germany, i.e., the multitude of individual princes. From then on these princes chose to think, live, and act according to the particularist and provincial style of Versailles, their ambitions limited to minor extensions of their private borders, their ears deaf to major plans of conquest. The climax of Spanish ambition was reached when Wallenstein proposed the march on Constantinople and the transformation of the Baltic Sea into a base for the Spanish fleet. His defection and fall mark the turning point. Spanish-French Germany was defeated at Konniggratz. Yet even as late as 1914, Austria's declaration of war against Serbia was a diplomatic move staged in the Spanish cabinet manner of the sixteenth century. England, on the other hand, did not declare the World War in this fashion, but forced its outbreak by means of tactically superior techniques developed during the nineteenth century.

The English Peace of Fontainebleau and the Prussian Peace of Hubertusberg, both signed in 1763, brought France's great century to a close. With a decline of the Latins, the control of Western Europe's destiny passed into the hands of the Germanic peoples. The birth of the modern English nation occurred in the seventeenth, that of the Prussian nation in the eighteenth century. They are the youngest and the last of the Western peoples. Freshly created from

unspoiled humanity, they possess the Faustian will to power and infinity in its purest, most vital form. Compared with them, France and Italy seem small indeed, and their epochs of political success appears as mere interludes in a great historical drama.

Only the Spanish, the English, and the Prussians have given European civilization universal ideas: ultramontanism, capitalism, and socialism in a higher sense than the one implied by the word as it is used today. Yet we must realize that France's decline also meant the end of Western culture. Paris inherited the creative principles of Early Gothic, the Italian Renaissance, and the Spanish Baroque, and combined them in their final, ripest, and sweetest form, the rococo style. Indeed, French culture is the only culture. England meant the beginning of civilization. French style is a style of manners, intellect, and taste; England has perfected the style of practical living, of money.

-11-

I should like to make clear what I mean by the term "Prussianism." The name, of course, refers to an area of Europe where certain attitudes took on impressive shape and began to evolve. But Prussianism is, first and foremost, a feeling, an instinct, a compulsion. It is the embodiment of spiritual and intellectual traits – and that means also of certain physical qualities – that have long since become the distinguishing characteristics of a race, or rather of the best and most typical representatives of this race. Certainly not every person born in England is "English" in the racial sense; and not everyone born in Prussia is genuinely "Prussian."[1] This word denotes everything we Germans possess by way of destiny, will, inner drive, and ability, and nothing of our vague ideas, desires, and whims. There are true Prussian types in all of Germany – I am thinking of men like Friedrich List and Hegel, of certain inventors, scholars, engineers, and organizers, but especially of a particular type of German worker. Since the Battles of Rossbach and Leuthen there have been many Germans who in the depth of their souls have harboured a small strain of Prussianism, a potential source of energy which can become active at great moments of history. As yet, however, the only real Prussian achievements have been the creations of Frederick William I and Frederick the Great: the Prussian state and the Prussian people.

Every supreme reality begets later realities. The Prussian element is again making itself felt in the Germans, or rather in the German type, of today; it is gradually reducing the effectiveness of outmoded ideologies. Although the best Germans are not aware of it, Prussianism, with its combination of realism, discipline, energy, and *esprit de corps*, is a great promise for the future. At the moment, the German people, indeed every individual German, is threatened by what we have dubbed "the German Michel" – the hodgepodge of faded beliefs which we often think of as ingenuous, but which really are useless or even dangerous for Western civilisation.

The concept of "the Germans" as used in the idealistic sense by professors and enthusiasts is an artificial construct based on the spurious foundation of a common language. It is unpolitical and impractical; it does not denote a "race" in the sense of instincts having a unified function in the real world. The idea is made up of the ossified remains of the Medieval Gothic mentality, together with the confused gropings of eternally childish souls. The Romantic movement in Germany, with its dreamy politics of 1848, once again brought these traits to the fore. Gothic vestiges, mixed with bits and shreds of English ideas, comprise the basis for such trivial beliefs as cosmopolitanism, international friendship, and universal humanitarianism. In serious cases people have been induced to treason by naively adopting such ideologies, singing and writing and talking about things which the Spanish sword and English money have actually achieved.

Such are the perennial provincialists, the simple-minded heroes of the German Bildungsroman, who may undergo a certain amount of inner development but who display an astounding lack of talent when it comes to dealing with things of the real world.

Such are the portly gentlemen of our bowling clubs, our beer halls, and our parliamentary assemblies, who excuse their own lack of ability by griping about the governmental departments they manage so badly. They are the ones with the sleepy tendency toward English liberalism and its hostility to the state, a feeling that pleases them even though they are ignorant of the strong initiative displayed by the private English citizen in political and other matters. Theirs is the narrow-minded, Italian and French preference for smallness in politics, the refusal to pursue political thought beyond the boundaries of their immediate neighbours. They

consider order as inimical to culture, and yet they have been unable to capture the spirit of the culture they praise so highly. At the same time they are the outspoken advocates of Spanish-style ecclesiastical authority, which only leads to squabbles among the various denominations.

Such, then, are our “typical Germans”: impractical, servile, stupid but honest, formless without any promise of improvement, old-fashioned, small-minded, thought-stifling, and degrading. They are the inner enemy of every true German as an individual and of all Germans as a nation. Together they represent the “German Michel,” of the five “typical” personifications of modern creative peoples, the only one that is negative in character. They represent a form of Gothic humanity that has resisted the efforts of post-Renaissance and post-Reformation culture to create a race in the new sense of the term.

-12-

The organised colonisation of the Slavic frontier involved Germans of all tribes, but the area was ruled by nobles from Lower Saxony. Thus the Prussian people, by origin, is closely related to the English. It was the same Saxons, Frisians, and Angles who, as roving Viking bands, and often under Norman and Danish names, subdued the Celtic Britons. Saxon settlements sprang up along the Thames just as they had in the desert-like region near the Havel and Spree Rivers, a stretch of land comparable in desolate expanse and fateful importance only to Latium, the Roman Campagna. By contemplating the rigid figures of Duke Widukind, the Margrave Gero, and Henry the Lion, we can gain an impression of the type of men who first set this people on its path of Destiny.

But the Viking spirit and the communal spirit of the Teutonic knights gradually gave rise to two antithetical ethical imperatives. One side bore the Germanic idea actively within itself, while the other felt itself subject to it: personal independence on the one hand, and suprapersonal community spirit on the other. Today we refer to these concepts as “individualism” and “socialism.” Virtues of the most exalted kind are summarised by these words: in the one case personal responsibility, self-reliance, determination, and initiative; and in the other, loyalty, discipline, selflessness, and a

sense of obligation. To be free and to serve – there is nothing more difficult than this. A people whose spirit and being are capable of it, a nation that can truly serve and be free, deserves to take upon itself a great destiny.

Service – that is the style of Old Prussia, similar to that of Old Spain, which also created a people by engaging in knightly warfare against the heathen. Not "I" but "we" – a feeling of community to which every individual sacrifices his whole being. The individual does not matter; he must offer himself to the totality. All exist for all, and all partake of that glorious inner freedom, the *libertas oboe dientiae* which has always distinguished the best exemplars of Prussian breeding. The Prussian army, Prussian civil service, and August Bebel's workers' brigades are all products of this breeding principle.

The urge to individuality and independence, however, later drove many of those with Viking blood in their veins – Englishmen, Germans, and Scandinavians – to seek their fortunes on the American prairie. This adventure was, in effect, a late resumption of the expeditions from Greenland at the time of the Eddas, when Vikings touched the Canadian coast: a tremendous migration of Teutons filled with a longing for distance and limitless expanses, teams of adventurers who were to lay the groundwork for yet another people with Saxon characteristics. Yet this new people was to arise apart from the maternal soil of the Faustian culture, and thus lacked the "inner basalt" of which Goethe speaks in his poem "America." It retained certain races of noble blood and the concomitant virtues of vigour and industriousness, but was without roots and therefore without a future.

Such was the origin of the English and Prussian types. The difference between them is that between a people whose soul has developed out of an awareness of insular security, and one that has been forced to maintain a frontier without natural borders to protect it from its enemies. In England, "splendid isolation" replaced the organised state. A stateless nation was only possible under those conditions; isolation was the necessary ingredient in the development of the spirit of modern England, a spirit that first gained full confidence in the seventeenth century, when the English became the undisputed masters of their island. It is a case of creative topography: the English people shaped and formed itself,

while the Prussian people was shaped in the eighteenth century by the Hohenzollern, who brought with them the frontier experience of southern Central Europe, and who had thus become advocates of the organized state.

As real political entities, as state and non-state, Prussia and England embody the maximum and minimum functioning of the suprapersonal socialistic principle. The liberal English "state" is completely intangible; it makes not a single claim on the individual citizen, nor does it make of him a meaningful element in a political system. It serves him exclusively as a means to an end. During the century between Waterloo and the World War, England went without compulsory education, compulsory military service, and compulsory social security – out of sheer antipathy to these negative privileges. The hostility of the English toward centralised organisation is neatly expressed in their word "society," which has displaced in their thinking the ideal notion of the "state." The concept entered the French Enlightenment as *societe*, Montesquieu arrived at this opinion: "Des societes de vingt a trente millions d'hommes – ce sont des montres dans la nature." This was an anarchical French idea, but in British formulation.

Rousseau, as is well known, used this word to conceal his hatred of rules and commands issued by authority; and Karl Marx, whose pattern of thought was likewise predominantly English, merely followed suit. Lessing, as a representative of the German Aufklarung, employed the term *Menschengeschlecht* in the sense of "human society." Goethe, Schiller, and Herder preferred the word *Gesellschaft*, which then became a favourite expression of the German liberals, who used it to blot out of their minds the nobler but more demanding idea of the *Staat*.

England did away with the principle of the organised state, and put in its place the notion of the free private citizen. The citizen demands permission to fight alone in the ruthless struggle for existence, for this is the only way he can satisfy his Viking instincts. Buckle, Malthus, and Darwin later postulated that the basic essence of "society" was the naked struggle for existence. And they were absolutely right, at least as far as their own country and people were concerned. To be sure, in modern England this principle operates in a highly refined and perfected fashion. But evidence of a more rudimentary adherence to it can be found in the Icelandic

sagas, where such behaviour is obviously spontaneous and not borrowed from another culture. The forces with which William the Conqueror took England in 1066 could be called a "society" of knightly adventurers, and English trading companies have subdued and expropriated entire countries – most recently, since 1890, the inland regions of South Africa. Gradually the entire English nation assumed the characteristics of a "society." The Old Norse instinct for piracy and clever trading has, in the end, influenced the Englishman's attitude toward all of reality, including property, work, foreign peoples, and the weaker individuals and classes among his own people. The same instinct has also yielded political techniques that are extremely effective weapons in the struggle for mastery of the globe.

A concept complementary to that of "society' is the 'private citizen.' He represents the sum of certain positive ethical qualities which like all great ethical virtues are not acquired through training or education, but are borne in the blood and perfected after passing through generation after generation. The peculiarly English style of politics is essentially one that involves private citizens or groups of such individuals. This, and only this, is the very meaning of parliamentary government. Cecil Rhodes was a private citizen who conquered foreign countries. The American billionaires are private citizens who rule foreign countries by means of an inferior class of professional politicians.

German liberalism, on the other hand, is ethically valueless. It merely says "No!" to the state, and is unable to justify its opposition by offering equally high-minded and vigorous positive suggestions.

Among the political attitudes that prevail in Germany today, only socialism has the potentiality of inner value and integrity. Liberalism is for the simple-minded, for those who like to chat a great deal about things they can never achieve. That is how we Germans are; we cannot possibly be like the English, we can only be caricatures of them – and that we have been often enough. Every man for himself: that is an English idea. Every man for every other man: that is the Prussian way. Liberalism, however, means "the state for itself, and every man for himself." That is a formula impossible to follow unless one is willing to take the liberal course, which is to say one thing while being dead set against its opposite, but in the end to let the opposite take over anyway.

There are in Germany a number of unpopular and disreputable political philosophies, but none is more fervently despised than the liberal view. Liberalism, in its German form, has always stood for mental sterility, for the ignorance and incomprehension of historical necessities. It has meant the inability to cooperate with others or to make sacrifices for others. Its position has always been one of entirely negative criticism, though not as an expression of an indomitable will to change society – as manifested by Bebel's Socialists – but simply out of the desire to "be different." While our liberals have never been at a loss for "standpoints" to adopt, they have lacked the inner vitality and discipline, the confidence and purposeful vigour that are so characteristic of the English form of liberalism. They are, in fact, nothing but obstacles on our historical path.

Since Napoleonic times liberalism has captured the minds of our educated classes.

Pseudo-intellectuals (Nietzsche's "cultural philistines") and ivory-tower scholars, shut off from the real world by a barrier of abstract knowledge, have been its staunchest defenders. Even the historian Mommsen, who mastered his difficult field of knowledge with true Prussian aplomb, and who recognised and admired the Prussian elements in Roman history, adopted as a member of the Assembly an uncomprehending standpoint of opposition to Bismarck's policies. An interesting comparison could be drawn between Mommsen and the English translator and editor of his *History of Greece*, George Grote, a banker and liberal.

With rabbit-like prolificacy, our writers and professors have sired book after book and scheme after scheme in which the English concepts of the free citizen, the free personality, the people as sovereign, and of a universal, free, and progressive humanity are lifted out of the reality of English business offices and emblazoned high in the German clouds. Bismarck, whom Bruno Bauer called in 1880 a "socialist imperialist," had some interesting things to say about these scholars who mistake the world of their books for the real world. August Bebel once demonstrated his infallible instinct by soundly berating the academics who had entered his party. He felt out the anti-Prussian instinct of the German intellectual, who was secretly undermining his country's order and discipline. And time has proved him right. Since Bebel's death, "educated"

Socialists have cracked the strength of the party and joined forces with our “educated” middle-class liberals. Together, the two groups are now staging in the Court Theatre at Weimar a revival of the ideological drama of the Frankfurt Paulskirche, in which professors hold scholarly conversations about the wording of a paper constitution.

-13-

In their “splendid isolation” the English have achieved on the basis of their ethical instinct a unity, both internal and external, such as no other modern Western European people has attained. England has produced a unique form of respectable society, a class of “ladies and gentlemen” joined together by a strong sense of common interest and by uniform patterns of thought, feeling, and behaviour. Since 1750 this magnificent type of society has been the model for all of modern civilisation, and in France first of all. The artistic fashion known as “Empire” served as a background for this style of living. It was essentially a practical and restrained form of rococo, and it imbued this society’s whole environment with elegant and refined taste. In this connection we think today particularly of the masters of the civilised portrait, Gainsborough and Reynolds.

The English were united by a common feeling of success and good fortune, unlike the Prussians, who were moved by a sense of challenge and duty. We may think of the English as Olympians of the business world at the banquet table, or as Vikings returned from distant explorations, but not as knights on the field of battle. Next to noble parentage, wealth is the major condition for acceptance in the group; it is also the criterion for rank within the group’s social structure. Wealth is the Englishman’s prime virtue, his distinguishing mark, his goal and his ideal. Today, only England has what may be called social culture, although it does not possess any other, more philosophical form of culture. The English are a people of profound superficiality; we Germans, in the “land of poets and thinkers,” so often display merely a superficial profundity.

There is not and cannot be a German or Prussian type of society like the English. A society made up of separate egos, lacking the unifying pathos of a common purpose and goal, always strikes us as somewhat ridiculous. In imitation of the English “club” and

“banquet,” our German individualists and liberals have invented the Verein and the Festessen; these are his devices for the development of “cultural solidarity.”

The Prussian style of living, in contrast to all this, has produced a profound and vigorous rank-consciousness, a feeling of unity based on an ethos of work, not of leisure. It unites the members of each professional group – military, civil service, and labour – by infusing them with a pride of vocation, and dedicates them to activity that benefits all others, the totality, the state. Such a feeling of solidarity within each group finds symbolic expression in words: at the top level there are Kamaraden, in the middle Kollegen, and at the bottom, but with the same sense of pride, Genossen. The bond of unity at all levels is a supreme ethos of dedication, not of success. The distinguishing feature of membership is rank, not wealth. The captain is superior to the lieutenant, even though the latter may be a prince or a millionaire. The French used the term “bourgeois” during their Revolution to underscore the ideal of equality, but this corresponds neither to the English nor the German sense of distance in social relations. A feeling for distance is common to both Germanic peoples; we differ only in the origins of the feeling. When a German worker uses the word “bourgeois” he means a person who, in his opinion, has merely obtained a certain social rank without performing any real work – it is the English ideal seen from the German perspective. England has its snobs, Germany its title-seekers.

The centuries-old feeling of group solidarity in both countries has brought forth a magnificent conformity of physical and mental attitudes, in the one case a race of successful businessmen, in the other a race of workers. One important symbol of this process, albeit an external one, is the English taste in men’s clothing. England has produced civilian dress in the purest sense: the uniform of the private individual. Their fashion holds unopposed sway in all of Western Europe. England has clothed the world in its uniform, the symbol of free trade, private fortune-making, and “cant.” The counterpart of this English style is the Prussian uniform. It is an emblem of public service, not of private existence. Rather than symbolising the success gained by diligent activity it stands for that activity itself. “I am the first servant of my state,” said the Prussian king whose father had made the wearing of uniforms a customary

practice among the nobility. How many have fully understood the significance of the phrase “the king’s mantle”?

England’s fashion in men’s wear is a matter of social obligation, even stricter than the specifications for uniform-wearing in the Prussian state. Whoever is anybody in England would not think of appearing before his peers in “civilian” dress, i.e., contrary to fashion and custom. But only the Englishman is capable of making a proper appearance in this “gentleman’s” costume. The Bratenrock of the provincial German philistine is a poor copy of the English model. Beneath it the philistine German heart continues to throb for “freedom” and “human dignity.” The Bratenrock is the symbol of the ideals of 1848, and is worn today with pride by the German socialists-gone-liberal. The Frenchman, who regards Faustian drives as embarrassing, gives his creative attention to women’s fashions rather than the uniforms of profession and success. In France, business and civic duty have had to give way to glamour.

To the Prussian way of thinking, the will of the individual is subsumed under the will of the totality. The officers’ corps, the members of the civil service branches, August Bebel’s army of workers, and ultimately the German Volk of 1813, 1870, and 1914 have all felt, willed, and acted as a suprapersonal unity. This is not just herd instinct; it is an expression of sublime strength and freedom, something which the outsider can never understand. Prussianism is exclusive. Even in its proletarian form it rejects the workers of other countries together with their egoistic pseudo-socialism. Servility, snobbishness – these are words for attitudes that are understood and despised only when they degenerate. The genuine Prussian despises no one; but he is himself feared.

The English, indeed the whole world, will never understand that the Prussian ethic carries with it a profound inner independence. For people of sufficient mental capacities a system of social obligations guarantees a supreme freedom of the inner life, which is not possible under a system of social privileges. A mentality such as that of General Moltke is unthinkable in England. The Englishman pays for his practical freedom with the loss of the other kind of freedom: he is inwardly a slave, whether as puritan, rationalist, sensualist, or materialist. For two centuries now he has been the inventor of all philosophies that do away with inner independence. Most recently he has produced Darwinism, which makes man’s

entire psychic makeup dependent on material forces. Incidentally, the particularly crass form of Darwinism propagated by Buchner and Haeckel has become the *Weltanschauung* of the German philistine.

The Englishman belongs to his "society" in the spiritual sense as well. His clothing is also an expression of his uniformed conscience. He cherishes his right to act as a private citizen, yet for him there exists no such thing as private thinking. His life is governed by a unified, theologically oriented philosophy of little real content, as fashionable as frockcoat and gloves. The term "herd instinct" is appropriate here, if anywhere.

-14-

The German Reformation has had no inner consequences. Lutheranism was an end, not a beginning. Gothic Germany was on its deathbed, but rose up one final time to perform this great, personal act. Luther himself is understandable only in the context of the Renaissance mood that prevailed in the visible Church of his time. Its public image was that of the Medici court; popes and cardinals were actually condottieri; Church administration systematically robbed the faithful of their private fortunes; religious faith itself was a formal matter, and the proportion of penance to sin had become just as much a question of taste as the relationship between column and architrave. The Northern Gothic sensibility reacted angrily to these developments, but the ensuing revolt was in fact naive and peasant-like; it produced a Church minus the papacy, and Gothic faith minus the clever emphasis on formalities. It stopped far short of the innermost core of the Church's institutional strength. The revolt arose from the spirit of negation; its fruitful passion could not endure for very long.

In its wake came the flourishing spirit of the Baroque, when the Spanish created the Counter-Reformation and the contentious Jesuit Order. This was a truly creative and affirmative movement, and it brought Catholicism to new heights of vital power.

Following this, in the seventeenth century, the new Northern nations set about creating new forms of religious life using the limitless possibilities offered by Christianity. Common to all these attempts was the rigorous will to action, a far cry from the leisurely

culture of Florence and the sterile, self-castigating dialectic of Pascal and the French Jansenists.

The results were revolutionary Independentism in England and, under its influence, the Pietistic movement in Swabia and Prussia. Pietism, with its quiet persuasiveness, had a momentous effect on the Prussian type that began to emerge at the time. It helped produce individuals who, on the outside, performed obedient and self-effacing service for their state, but whose inner life was free of the limitations imposed by worldly existence – people with a tender, profound abundance of emotion and genuine inner simplicity. Queen Louise, William I, Bismarck, Moltke, and Hindenburg are prime examples of this type, persons whose piety has virtually been free of dogma. They have concealed their piety from others, feeling that it is best exemplified by dutiful public action and not by public confessions.

The English Independent, on the other hand, was externally free, just as his Norman forebears were free. He fashioned for himself a pure lay religion using the Bible as fundament, granting to each individual the privilege of interpreting the text as he wished. Whatever the Independent undertook was therefore, as it were by definition, morally correct. The Englishman never entertains a single doubt on this score. Success is a proof of Divine Providence. While the Pietist regarded himself as solely responsible for the morality of his behaviour, the Independent placed this responsibility with God. No one has the power to alter such deep convictions. Rationalisations can always be devised for compulsive desires, and, should compulsion lead to decay and decline, that is simply the inevitability of fate.

With truly remarkable self-assurance the instinct of the English formed its own religious consciousness from the sterile, doctrinaire, formalistic, and thus typically French teachings of Calvin. In the minds of Cromwell and his soldiers the doctrine of predestination meant that the nation was the Community of Saints, the English nation in particular was the Chosen People. Every act was justified before God simply because it was possible to perform; every guilt, every brutality, indeed every crime committed on the path to success was “predestined by God” and thus He alone was responsible. On the basis of this boundless self-confidence and ruthlessness, England has become the mighty nation that it is.

Although Pietism exerted its most powerful influence in the German-speaking areas of Europe, it was hardly a direct expression of a German race. It definitely had impractical and provincial traits. It brought small circles of believers together in a spirit of intimate congeniality. For them life became an ideal of service; one's meagre portion of earthly existence amid toil and misery took on meaning only in the framework of some higher duty.

Yet such a duty had to be imposed, and this was the superb accomplishment, partly willed and partly unintentional, of the great Hohenzollerns, the heirs to the knightly ideal of the East European colonies. From amid all the blemishes of princely and urban egotism, from beneath all the weakness of royalty, there emerged the idea of Old Prussia, the one great idea that has come forward in Germany since that time. It has won a place in the souls of the best Germans ever since, even when their hearts have been opposed to it.

The Pietism of Swabia eventually degenerated into middle-class sentimentality, or gave up its best minds – Hegel, for example – to the North, where the Old Prussian ideal brought forth a new type, the hard-thinking proponent of this religious sensibility. A profound contempt for mere wealth, luxury, convenience, pleasure, and prosperity characterises the Prussian spirit of these centuries. Here we find the germ of the later ideals of military and public service. All these comforts are incompatible with the knightly sense of dignity and obligation. But for the English they are gifts of God; comfort, for them, is proof of Divine Providence, and they accept it with devout gratitude.

A sharper contrast is hardly imaginable. Work, for the pious Independent, is a consequence of the Fall; the Prussian regards it as a Divine Commandment. Two interpretations of the nature of work are here at odds with each other: work as business and as vocation. Let us contemplate the sound and sense of these words. "Vocation" means "calling": a call from God Himself. In this view, work is in itself morally good. To the Englishman and American, moral success is contained in the goal of work, in success, money, wealth. Work is merely a path toward these goals, to be chosen with special consideration of its comfort and security. Obviously, conflict is unavoidable on the path to success, but the Puritan conscience can justify any means. Whoever stands in the way is simply pushed

aside – individuals, whole classes, whole nations. That, after all, is the will of God. It is easy to see how such ideas, once applied in real life, can bring a nation to the very greatest heights of achievement.

In order to overcome man's inborn lethargy, the Prussian socialist ethic maintains that the chief aim of life is not happiness. "Do your duty," it says, "by doing your work." The English capitalist ethic says, "Get rich, and then you won't have to work any more." There is doubtless something provocative about this latter motto. It is tempting, it appeals to very basic human instincts. The working masses of ambitious nations have understood it well. As late as the nineteenth century it produced the Yankee type with his irresistible practical optimism. The other motto is forbidding. It is for the few who wish to inject it into the community and thus force it upon the masses. The first maxim is for a stateless country, for egoists and Viking types with the urge for constant personal combat, such as we find in English sportsmanship. It implies extreme independence of mind, the right to gain happiness at the expense of all others, as long as one's strength holds out – in other words, scientific Darwinism. The other, however, is an expression of the socialist idea in all its profundity: the will to power, the struggle for happiness, but for the happiness of the totality, not of the individual. In this sense Frederick William I, and not Marx, was the first conscious socialist. The universal socialist movement had its start with this exemplary personality. Kant, with his categorical imperative, provided the movement with a formula.

In the final phase of Western European culture two great schools of philosophy were founded, the English school of egoism and sensualism around 1700, and the Prussian school of idealism around 1800. They express what these nations are, as ethical, religious, political, and economic entities.

Philosophy in itself is nothing – a collection of words, a series of books. Nor is it either true or false, in itself. It is language of the life of a great mind. For the Englishman, Hobbes is speaking the truth when he sets up the "selfish system" of egoism and the optimistic Whig philosophy of the common good ("the greatest happiness for the greatest Number"). And Shaftesbury also speaks the truth, for the Englishman, with his portrait of the gentleman, the Tory, the sovereign personality living life to the fullest. Yet for us Kant is just as truthful with his contempt for "happiness" and usefulness, his

categorical imperative of duty. Hegel, in our view, speaks the truth when, with his powerful sense of reality, he places the concrete destiny of individual nations, and not the well-being of "human society," at the centre of his historical deliberations. Mandeville, in his *Fable of the Bees*, declares that the egoism of the individual is the driving force of the state; Fichte says it is the obligation to work. Which is the highest goal – freedom by means of wealth, or freedom from wealth? Ought we to prefer Kant's categorical imperative: "Behave as if the precepts governing your behaviour were to become law for all," or Bentham's "Behave in such a way that you will have success"?

Vikings and knights – both of these types live on the antithesis of the English and Prussian moral systems. The philosophical teachings that have since arisen out of these separate worlds of sensibility, the progeny of the philosophers of both nations, all bear the same distinguishing marks. The Englishman is a utilitarian, in fact the only one in Western Europe. He cannot be otherwise, and whenever he attempts to deny this strongest inner drive of his the result is the phenomenon that has become famous as "cant" – it can be found in its purest form in the letters of Lord Chesterfield. The English are a nation of theologians. Their great revolution took on primarily religious forms, and following the abolition of the state no language except theological language remained with which to express the concerns of communal life. And so it has been: a biblical interpretation of questionable business dealings can ease the conscience and greatly increase ambition and initiative. Out of consideration for the chances of success in the personal struggle for existence, the theological mentality tends to avoid naming by its proper name the true goal of all activity: wealth.

If there is a similar conflict within the Prussian atmosphere, then it is concerned with position and rank. In many cases one is tempted to call it excessive ambition and title-seeking. In principle, however, it is a manifestation of the will to take on higher responsibility because one feels ready to do so.

-15-

Among all the peoples of Western Europe these two are distinguished by a rigid social hierarchy. This is a sign of their drive

for dynamic activity. It puts every individual in the precise location in which he is needed most. Such an ordering is the result of a wholly unconscious and involuntary conservation of energies. It is natural and proper to a particular people only; no other people, no man of genius or ever so powerful will can possibly re-create it. It is an expression of the people's fundamental moral and ethical attitude. Centuries are required for the clarification and realisation of this special feeling for social structure. The Viking spirit and the spirit of the medieval knights are apparent here also: the ethos of success and the ethos of duty. The English people is structured along lines of wealth and poverty, the Prussian along lines of command and obedience.

The meaning of class distinctions is thus completely different in these two countries. In an association of independent private citizens the lowest class is the group that has nothing; in a true state the lowest class is the group that has nothing to say. In England democracy means the possibility that everyone can get rich; in Prussia it means that the existing ranks are open to everyone. Within the structure of Prussian society the individual receives his place according to his ability, not according to the demands of tradition.

France (and this means Florence as well) has never had a natural and instinctive class structure of this sort, not even before 1789. Social anarchy was the rule; there existed arbitrary privileged groups of various sizes and composition, and no firm system of relationships among them. Besides the class of court nobility there were the judicial nobles; there were types such as the abbé and the *tenants generaux*, and fine distinctions such as those between factions of the urban merchant class. This lack of hierarchic social structure existed in France from the very beginning, and is an outcome of the typically French penchant for *egalite*. In England nobility gradually came to mean primarily the nobility of wealth, in Prussia the nobility of military achievement. The French noble class has never attained such a uniformity of social significance. The English Revolution was directed against the state, i.e., against the "Prussian" sense of order in the Church and in public life. The German Revolution fought against the "English" system of wealth and poverty, which originated in industrial and commercial developments of the nineteenth century and had become the focal

point for anti-Prussian and antisocialist tendencies. The French Revolution was not directed against a foreign, and therefore immoral, order; it combatted order per se. That is democracy, French style.

Here, finally, we can grasp the profound ethical meaning of the slogans "capitalism" and "socialism." They represent two systems of social stratification, one that is based on wealth and the uninhibited struggle for success, and one that is founded on authority and legislation. The Englishman would never accept commands from someone poorer than himself, nor would the Prussian ever pay homage to wealth for its own sake. Yet even the class-conscious worker in the erstwhile party of August Bebel obeyed the party leadership with the same sureness of instinct as the English labourer respects a millionaire as a recipient of divine favours. Proletarian class conflict is incapable of affecting such deeply rooted attitudes. The entire English labour movement is based on the distinction between rich and poor within the working class itself. Under such conditions it is impossible to imagine anything like the iron discipline of a Prussian-style party of millions.

"Unequal distribution of wealth" is the typically English proletarian formula, used repeatedly by Shaw. Though it sounds ridiculous to us, it is precisely appropriate to the ideal of living professed by the civilised Viking. With due respect to the magnificent flowering of this ideal in the Yankee type, we might speak of two forms of socialism existing in the Anglo-Saxon world and in Germany: socialism for the billionaires and socialism for civil servants. As an example of the first type we can point to Andrew Carnegie, who first transformed a large amount of public funds into a private fortune, only to turn around and distribute it with sovereign gesture among public enterprises. His pronouncement, "Whoever dies poor dies in dishonour," implies a high regard for the will to power over the totality. This kind of private socialism, in extreme cases simply the dictatorial administration of public monies, ought not to be confused with the socialism of true public servants and administrators (who themselves can be quite poor). Examples of this latter form of socialism are the otherwise quite different personalities of Bismarck and Bebel.

George Bernard Shaw is today the prime exponent of "capitalistic" socialism, which still sees wealth and poverty as the

controlling factors in the economic sphere. “Poverty is the greatest of evils and the worst of crimes” (*Major Barbara*). He preaches against the “cowardly masses that cling to the feeble prejudice that it is better to be good than rich.” The worker should try to get rich – this was the policy of the English trade unions right from the beginning. That is why there has never been a socialism in the proletarian sense in England, from Owen to Shaw – it was impossible to distinguish from the capitalism of the lower class.

For us, the controlling factor of society is the interplay of command and obedience in a strictly ordered community, be it state, party, officers’ corps, or civil service. The member of any one of these communities is a servant of that community. *Travailler pour le roi de Prusse* – that means doing one’s duty without giving oneself up to corrupt notions of private profit. The wages paid to Prussian officers and civil servants since the days of Frederick William I have been ridiculously small when compared to the sums required to belong even to the middle class in England. But the Prussians have worked harder, more selflessly, and more honestly. The real compensation for this work is rank.

It was the same in August Bebel’s party. This workers’ state-within-a- state did not want to get rich, it wanted to rule. During their enforced strikes these workers starved often enough, but in the interest of gaining power, not for higher wages. They struck in support of a philosophy that was supposedly or actually opposed to that of their employers. They struck for a moral principle, and a defeat in their battle could ultimately mean a moral victory.

English workers were completely unable to understand this. They were not poor, and during their strikes they accepted the hundreds of thousands of pounds offered to them by German workers, who imagined that their comrades across the Channel were fighting for the same cause. Thus the November Revolution in Germany was a case of insubordination in the workers’ party as well as in the armed forces. The sudden transformation of the disciplined labour movement into a wild struggle for higher wages, fought by single groups independent of each other, was a victory for the English idea. Its failure was underscored by the fact that a new, highly disciplined organisation reappeared in the Army. The only really talented personality to appear on the scene was a soldier. The German Revolution will continue in this manner, as a series of

successes and failures of military authority.

-16-

The same contrast prevails in the economic thought of both countries. Political economists have committed the fateful error of thinking solely in materialistic terms. Instead of considering the multiplicity of economic instincts in the world, they always speak in general terms of the economic stratification of “man,” of “the modern age,” and of “the present.” When using such language the scientific discipline of political economics displays all the shortcomings of its English origins. For it had its start among modern Englishmen, with all their self-confidence and lack of psychological tact. It became their only “philosophy”; it corresponded to their sense of mercantile competition, success, and personal gain. With this purely English interpretation of economic affairs they have infected the minds of the Continent since the eighteenth century.

The Teutonic knights that settled and colonised the eastern borderlands of Germany in the Middle Ages had a genuine feeling for the authority of the state in economic matters, and later Prussians have inherited that feeling. The individual is informed of his economic obligations by Destiny, by God, by the state, or by his own talent – these are simply different words for the same fact. Rights and privileges of producing and consuming goods are equally distributed. The aim is not ever greater wealth for the individual or for every individual, but rather the flourishing of the totality. Thus Frederick William I and his successors colonised the marshlands in the East, regarding this as their divine mission. The modern German labourer, with his fine sense of reality, has thought and acted along precisely these lines, although the theories of Karl Marx have obscured for him the close connections between his own aims and those of the Old Prussians.

The pirate instinct of the insular nation has a wholly different understanding of economic affairs. There economic activity is considered a matter of combat and booty – ultimately, the individual’s share in the booty. The Norman state, which developed a refined technique of amassing money reserves, was based entirely on the piracy principle. The feudal system was introduced as a

magnificent and elegant means to the same piratical end. The barons exploited the land apportioned to them, and were in turn exploited by the duke. The goal of all was wealth. God bestowed it on the venturesome. The modern science of accounting had its start with these sedentary pirates. The words “cheque,” “account,” “control,” “receipt,” “record,” and the modern term for the English treasury, “Exchequer,” originated in the accounting chambers of the Norman Duke Robert le Diable (died 1035). When England was conquered in 1066 the Norman barons expropriated the Saxons, their tribal relatives, in the same way. Their descendants have inherited their outlook.

The same style is still apparent today in every English trade company and every American trust. Their aim is not to work steadily to raise the entire nation’s standard of living, it is rather to produce private fortunes by the use of private capital, to overcome private competition, and to exploit the public through the use of advertising, price wars, artificial stimulation of the consumer, and strict control of the ratio of supply and demand. When the Englishman speaks of national wealth he means the number of millionaires in the country. As Friedrich Engels wrote, “Nothing is more foreign to the English mentality than solidarity.” Even in sports and recreation the Englishman sees a test of personal, and especially physical, superiority. He engages in sports for the sake of national and world records; he enjoys prize-fighting, a sport that is closely related to his economic habits and is quite alien to the minds of gymnasts in Germany.

All this proves that the economic existence of England is synonymous with business, i.e., a refined form of piracy. The English instinct regards all commodities as booty, items to be manipulated in order to get rich. The English machine industry was created in the interest of commerce and trade, its chief aim being the production of cheap goods. When English agriculture began to limit wage cuts by fixing its own prices, it was simply abandoned in the interest of commerce. The battles between capital and labour in English industry in 1850 were concerned with the commodity “labour” – one side wanted to get it cheap, the other wanted a high price for it. Everything that Marx has to say with grudging admiration about “capitalistic society” refers principally to English, and not to a universal, economic instinct.

The sublime term “free trade” is part and parcel of Viking economics. The Prussian, i.e., socialist term would be “state control of the exchange of goods.” This assigns to trade a subordinate rather than a dominant role within the complex of economic activity. We can understand why Adam Smith harboured a hatred of the state and the “cunning beasts called statesmen.” Indeed, government officials must have the same effect on tradesmen as policemen on burglars and naval cruisers on the crews of pirate ships.

Likewise characteristic of the Englishman is his overestimation of the importance of capital sums for economic health. The materialist finds it impossible to understand that the English concept of capital is psychologically, and therefore practically (the practical life is, after all, an expression of psychic conditions) different from the French system of private means and the Prussian concept of administrative funds. The English have never been good at psychology. They have always considered their own ideas as logically binding on “mankind.” In fact, all of modern political economics rests on the basic error of equating economic life everywhere in the world with an exclusively English interest in business, and the error is committed even by those who reject the theories of the Manchester school.[2] Marxism, in the very act of negating this theory, has adopted its patterns quite completely. This explains the grotesque fiasco of all predictions concerning the outbreak of the World War; it was said that the collapse of world economy would follow within a few months.

English-style capitalism is the only true counterpart to Marxist socialism. The regulation of economic affairs by the state, a Prussian idea, transformed German capitalism instinctively into a socialist economic pattern. The first step in this process was the protective tariff legislation of 1879. The large syndicates were, in effect, economic states within the state. They represent “capitalism’s first practical and systematic large-scale attempt, although it was not consciously planned, to understand the mysteries of its own techniques and to gain control of social forces which up to then had been regarded as natural and unfathomable, requiring passive, blind submission.” (Paul Lensch*, Drei Jahre Weltr evolution,* 1918).

Nevertheless, German liberalism – the Englishman within us – still worships free trade, not just the freedom of the human spirit. In

doing so, the “liberal” German cuts his silliest figure. Because he has misunderstood and tended to favour certain Viking instincts, he has “summarily” rejected the authoritarian state, the suprapersonal will, and the suppression of the individual in favour of the totality. By adopting this attitude he has acted, or so he believes, “metaphysically.” That is the belief of “educated” Germans who lack practical experience: the professors, the poets and thinkers, all those who write profusely and never do anything. They cannot, of course, understand or morally accept the other form of liberalism, the pirate principle of free trade with its every-man-for-himself philosophy.

They simply have never grasped the connection between the abstract notion of the autonomous self and the practical application of this notion in the offices of the large industrial and commercial firms. Therefore German stock-market liberalism has hitched the German professor to its own wagon. It has sent him to the political meetings to talk and be talked to. It has put him in the editor’s chair, where with philosophical acumen he has turned out article after profound article, conveying to a gullible public (for whom the newspaper has long since replaced the Bible as the source of Truth) political opinions that were commercially desirable to maintain. It has sent him to the legislative assembly to say “Aye” and “Nay,” thereby assuring for commercial interests, which never cared anyway for theories and constitutions, the creation of more and more opportunities for bribery and piracy.

This English-German liberalism now exerts a business-like control over practically all the important German newspapers, the entire educated class, and the liberal party. But the professors are not aware of this. In England the liberal is a liberal through and through; he is ethically free, and for this reason also economically free, and is quite conscious of the connection. The German liberal has two discrete personalities, the ethical and the commercial. The one personality thinks, the other acts and controls; only the latter personality is aware of the mutual relationship – and finds it amusing.

Thus we find two great economic principles opposed to each other in the modern world. The Viking has become a free-tradesman; the Teutonic knight is now an administrative official. There can be no reconciliation. Each of these principles is

proclaimed by a German people, Faustian men par excellence. Neither can accept a restriction of its will, and neither can be satisfied until the whole world has succumbed to its particular idea.[3] This being the case, war will be waged until one side gains final victory. Is world economy to be worldwide exploitation, or worldwide organisation? Are the Caesars of the coming empire to be billionaires or universal administrators?[4] Shall the population of the earth, so long as this empire of Faustian civilization holds together, be subjected to cartels and trusts, or to men such as those envisioned in the closing pages of Goethe's *Faust*, Part II? Truly, the destiny of the world is at stake.

French economic thought has been just as provincial as that of the Renaissance. Provincialism is characteristic of the mercantile system under Louis XIV, of the physiocratic school of Turgot during the Enlightenment, but also of the socialistic planning of Fourier, who aimed at dividing "society" into small economic units to be called "phalansteries" (cf. the late novels of Zola). Only the three genuinely Faustian peoples possess the inner drive to create an economic system for the whole world. The knightly Spaniards made an attempt when they incorporated the New World into their empire. As true soldiers they refrained from theorising about their economic expansion, but by broadening geographical and political horizons they prepared the way for a new kind of economic thought.

The first country to formulate a theory about its economic activity was England, which created the notion of "political economics" to explain its own practice of universal exploitation. As businessmen the English were clever enough to realise the power of the written word over the most book-conscious nation of all times. And they persuaded their nation that the interests of its pirates were those of the entire world. They succeeded in combining the notion of freedom with that of free trade.

The third and last of these Faustian peoples, like the Spanish a true military nation, lacked the practical shrewdness of the English. Prussia's accomplishments within its own economic sphere received in theory, with the aid of the other-worldly German philosophy of idealism, the exalted title of socialism. But the true creators of Prussian economic life were not able to recognise their creations in this theoretical guise. Thus there arose a bitter conflict between two

unnecessarily hostile factions: one made up of theorists, and another in charge of practice. We have now reached the stage where it is imperative for each of the sides to come to terms with the other and to accept the task that faces both.

Shall the world be ruled by capitalists or by socialists? This question cannot be decided by two countries in competition. It has become an internal question for each and every country. As soon as the weapons used against foreign states are put aside, they will be raised again in civil war. Today, in every country, there is an English and a Prussian economic party. And when the classes and factions are tired of warfare, individual mastertypes will keep it up in the name of principle. Amid the great conflicts of the Classical age between the Apollonian and Dionysian principles, the Peloponnesian War developed out of a war between Athens and Sparta into a contest between oligarchy and demos in all cities. The decisions reached at the battles of Philippi and Actium had to be fought over again in the time of the Gracchi, filling the Roman Forum with blood. In the Chinese world the corresponding war between the Tsin and Tsu Empires, between the philosophies of tao and li, lasted for a century. In Egypt great mysteries of the same kind are concealed beneath the mystery of the Hyksos period, the hegemony of eastern barbarians. Were they summoned, or did they come because the Egyptians had become desperately exhausted by civil strife? Will the Western world assign the same role to the Russians? Our trivial peacemongers can have their talk about reconciliation among nations; they will never reconcile ideas. The Viking spirit and the spirit of the knights will fight it out to the finish, even though the world may emerge weary and broken from the bloodbath of this century.[5]

-17-

This brings us to the political aspects of the English-Prussian antithesis. Politics is the highest and most powerful dimension of all historical existence. World history is the history of states; the history of states is the history of wars. Ideas, when they press for decisions, assume the form of political units: countries, peoples, or parties. They must be fought over not with words but with weapons. Economic warfare becomes military warfare between countries or within countries. Religious associations such as Jewry

and Islam, Huguenots and Mormons, constitute themselves as countries when it becomes a matter of their continued existence or their success. Everything that proceeds from the innermost soul to become flesh or fleshly creation demands a sacrifice of flesh in return.

Ideas that have become blood demand blood. War is the eternal pattern of higher human existence, and countries exist for war's sake; they are signs of readiness for war. And even if a tired and blood-drained humanity desired to do away with war, like the citizens of the Classical world during its final centuries, like the Indians and Chinese of today, it would merely exchange its role of war-wager for that of the object about and with which others would wage war. Even if a Faustian universal harmony could be attained, masterful types on the order of late Roman, late Chinese, or late Egyptian Caesars would battle each other for this Empire – for the possession of it, if its final form were capitalistic; or for the highest rank in it, if it should become socialistic.

An inseparable element of any political pattern is, however, the people that has created this pattern, that bears it in its blood, that alone is capable of embodying it. Taken by itself, a political pattern is an empty concept. Anyone can speak its "language." But no one can truly re-create it or imbue it with genuine reality. In politics as in other ways, there is no choice. Each culture and each single people within a culture arranges its affairs and fulfils its destiny according to patterns that are congenital and essentially immutable. A philosophical debate about "monarchy" or "republic" is really a quarrel about words. The monarchic form of government *an sich* is just as unreal a concept as the cloud form *an sich*.[6] An ancient Classical "republic" and a Western European "republic" are two incommensurate things. The ultimate meaning of great political crises is something other than a change in the form of government. When a crisis elicits the cry of "monarchy" or "republic" it is really nothing more than a cry, the verbal cue in a melodramatic scene, although it is the only thing most people in a given epoch can understand and be inspired by. In reality, following such ecstatic moments a people will always return to its own political pattern, the essential quality of which can almost never be expressed in popular language. The instincts of a vigorous race are so strong that they can come to grips with any form of government that historical

accident may put in their path, and mould it to their own purposes. And when this takes place no one is conscious that the political pattern in question has been realised in name only. The true political shape of any given country is not be found in the wording of its constitution; it is, rather, the unwritten and unconscious laws according to which the constitution is put into effect. Without reference to the particular nations under discussion, the words "republic," "parliamentarism," and "democracy" are meaningless.

Accordingly, the "parliamentary form of government" is a specifically English phenomenon, unthinkable except as the product of the Viking character of the English, their insular situation, and the centuries-long process by which they have combined a certain method of conducting business affairs with a whole social ethic. To attempt to imitate it is futile. "Parliamentarism" in Germany is either nonsense or treason. England has succeeded in poisoning all countries to which it has offered the "medicine" of its own form of government. And conversely: should the final development of Western civilization, i.e., the civilization that now rules the world as a whole, make this form of government impossible, England would surely lose its political viability as a nation.[7]

English socialism would commit treason if it tried to do away with Parliament. For England is a free society of private individuals, to whom insularity has offered the opportunity of abolishing the "state" and substituting for this purely formal idea a series of wars, lasting through 1916 and waged by soldiers and sailors hired away from foreign countries. This stateless parliamentarism presupposes a firm two-party system, in which the parties must be related to each other in a very special way with respect to organisation, practice, interests, moods, customs, and spirit.

What the English call "parties" – the word means different things in different countries – were originally groupings of nobility, which became separated during the revolutions of 1642 and especially 1688 along lines of the Anglican and Puritan faiths. This means, of course, that the basic motive for their separation was a difference in ethical outlook. The nautical Norse ancestors, of whom we read in the Icelandic sagas, bequeathed different traits to each new group. The Tories inherited their pride in noble blood, their aristocratic respect for inherited authority, for landed property, for military feats and bloody conflict. In the Whigs we can discern the

Norseman's delight in piracy and plunder, his pursuit of quick and easy triumphs with abundant portable booty, and his esteem for cunning and cleverness rather than physical strength.[8] Today's English imperialist and free-tradesman is the end product of a centuries-long process during which these basic Norse traits have been sharpened and refined, thus resulting in an ever more careful breeding within the actual ruling class. The democratisation of England in the nineteenth century was only apparent; in reality the nation continued to be led,[9] as in Prussia, by a minority possessing unified, firm capabilities for practical action. The sublime exercise of this will and this practical talent continued right through to the end of the last war.

Business – in the piratical sense – is the sum and substance of this politics, no matter whether Tories[10] or Whigs are the bosses at any given moment. Both types are, of course, "gentlemen" first and foremost, members of the same distinguished society, displaying the same admirable conformity of social attitudes. For this reason it is possible for Englishmen, though at times they may engage in bitter hostilities against each other, to settle momentous disputes by means of private conversation and private correspondence. Thus they are able to get many things done solely on the basis of the end justifying the means. In any other country such disputes would founder on the hubbub of clumsy, legalistic popular assemblies. The English party leader goes about his nation's business as a private individual. When he meets with political success he declares that "England" was behind his policies. When his policies, though successful, involve dealings that are diplomatically or morally embarrassing, he resigns from his post, whereupon the nation admonishes him with puritanical severity for his lack of manners, and by applauding his resignation rejects the uncomfortable consequences of his actions. Yet all the while the nation thanks God for the grace He has bestowed on England by this politician's successful work.

Such behaviour is feasible only if both parties are of the same mind on essential issues. It is true that the Tories brought about Napoleon's downfall and took him off to St. Helena after he had spread Whig ideas over the Continent. But Fox was not at all an unconditional opponent of war with Napoleon. And when in 1815 Robert Peel led Cobden's free-trade system to final victory, thus

preferring the economic subjugation of the world to its transformation into a military protectorate, the Tories readily recognised in the Whig system some of their own principles. Tory politics during the reign of Edward VII caused the World War; yet the Whigs, opponents of the war, accepted this possibility tacitly by welcoming "liberal imperialists" into their ranks.

This kind of activity is the true "parliamentarism," and not the worthless and ineffective externals that are considered as "parliamentarism" in Germany today, such as the doling out of ministers' portfolios to party leaders or the exposing of the parliamentary process to the widest publicity. In the British system, the final decisions of the party leaders are a secret even to the parliamentary majority. The publicly visible activities of the politicians are *fable convenue*, and the exemplary tact of both parties sees to it that the illusion of "government by the people" is rigorously upheld in reverse proportion to the actual meaningfulness of the term.

The idea that parties, above all English parties, are segments of the people at large is dilettantish nonsense. In reality there can be no such thing as popular government or government by the people, except in political units comprising a few villages. Only hopelessly liberal Germans still cling to this notion. In all places where English political systems have penetrated, the government actually lies in the hands of a very few men who, with dictatorial arbitrariness, exert their power within the party on the basis of their experience, their superior will, and their tactical skill.

The question therefore arises concerning the relationship between people and party. What meaning can elections have in the modern Western nations? Who does the electing? And whom or what does he elect? The sense of the English system is that the people elect a party, and not just a "representative" of its will and opinions, for these are more or less influenced by the party leadership in any case. The parties are very old and firmly established institutions, whose business it is to conduct the political affairs of the entire English nation. The individual Englishman realizes the practicality of such an institution, and from election to election he supports the party whose declared intentions correspond most closely to his own opinions and interests. He also realizes the unimportance of the individual "representative" appointed quite

arbitrarily by the party. Indeed, the phrase “fatuous electorate” fits the average representative better than the voting mass itself. It is significant that English workers have quite often voted for an employer nominated by one of the age-old parties rather than for a workman candidate. In each case, after sober appraisal of the situation, they have regarded it as more advantageous to vote in this way.

In America, where the genuine Englishman no longer stands behind the system, the custom now is for the parties to deliver one set of promises to the people, and another to the trust that fills the party coffers; the first set is published, the second is kept.

-18-

We have now broached the decisive question of how the job of politics is paid for in countries that have the parliamentary form of government. The naive democratic enthusiasts simply do not notice that in this day and age, when all nations, with or without their consent, are led by a politics of commercial interests, the question of finances is crucial, not to the spirit of the constitution but to the much more important spirit of its practical application. Guileless enthusiasts probably think in terms of Representatives’ salaries, but that is an irrelevant matter. Whereas the monarchs of the Baroque age disposed of state income as they saw fit, modern political parties merely administrate and allocate these funds. This being the case, it is purely a question of expediency whether big business decides to mollify the electorate, the representatives, or the party leadership itself. The first of these alternatives fits the pattern of English parliamentarism, and in the eighteenth century was practiced in the grand style as vote purchasing. In the course of time this method has become superfluous. Tories and Whigs from upper-class groups having clearly defined social attitudes are now the spokesmen for purely commercial interests, and their sponsors differ only occasionally with respect to the most advantageous form and moral rationale for a particular undertaking. Interest groups once divided have gradually merged under the aegis of the democratised parties.

In anarchic France, where clubs and private associations of rapidly changing number and strength assume the names of parties,

the custom has been to pay the representatives, either in cash or by subtler means. The socialist representatives are just as receptive to these techniques as all the others. Often enough, a Frenchman sets out on a political career with the certainty that after a few years he can buy a castle.

In Germany, where the parties approach the people with ideological programs, liberalism has had to do favours for the stock exchange, while heavy industry has gained control of the nationalistic wing. Heavy industry and the stock exchange pay for political agitation and also for a favourable press (partly through advertisement contracts). If the Weimar Constitution remains in effect even for just a few years, representatives' posts favourable to certain commercial interests will be available for a set price. The very first elections for the Weimar Assembly revealed the beginnings of such practices.

That democracy and universal suffrage are reliable tools of capitalism has been proved in all countries that have adopted these methods on the English model. While the liberal professor hails the Constitution of Weimar as the fulfilment of his dreams, the capitalist liberal welcomes it as the simplest and probably cheapest way to subject politics to the business office and the state to the grafters.

All this characterises the hegemony of the Viking spirit over Western civilisation, which up to now has been largely English civilisation. The form in which the essentially nontransferable parliamentarism of England has insisted itself upon the Continent and gradually the whole world is the "constitution." It has made criticism of the existing government an integral part of government itself. But the stateless character of government that evolved within English society have given all new constitutions based on the English model a definite anti-state tendency. The result has been, on the one hand, the creation of pseudo-parties that have vainly attempted the English technique of putting executive power in the hands of the party leadership. On the other hand an "opposition" has appeared on the scene, but it is a destructive rather than a constructive opposition because of the constant friction between the group in power and the party principle, or among the parties themselves as a result of their widely divergent conceptions of party privilege. Mirabeau, the cleverest mind in France at the time it

surrendered to the Viking idea, would certainly, had he lived longer, have returned to absolutism in order to save his country from the pseudo-parliamentarism of the sovereign clubs. The word "intrigue" expresses quite fully the attitude assumed by the anarchic French, in place of the careful strategy of the English, to make such methods conform to their way of life.

Consequently, the most practicable form of anarchy, instituted now and again in France to achieve amazing but ephemeral successes, has been a kind of despotism-of-the-moment. This is the case with Mazarin and Richelieu, and since 1789 it has been the secret goal of even the smallest political clubs. Its classic expression was the dictatorship of a foreign soldier, Napoleon.

Machiavelli, amid the confusion of Renaissance politics, put his hopes on Cesare Borgia to achieve something quite similar. Of all Western nations, France and Italy have not brought forth a single political idea. The state of Louis XIV, like Napoleon's empire, was an isolated incident, not a durable system. As an organic form capable of development, the absolute monarchy of the Baroque age was a Habsburg and not a Bourbon creation. From Philip II to Metternich, the house of Habsburg set the style for the governmental practices of nearly all courts and cabinets; the court of the *roi soleil* made its impression solely by costume and ceremony. Proof of this is Napoleon's very Renaissance-like bearing and appearance. Only in Florence and Paris was a successful military officer able to play such a non-traditional role and to institute such a fantastic and transitory type of state. In fact, there was no typical governmental system in France. Rousseau, the theoretician of political anarchy, derived his concept of the social contract from the firmly established "society" of England, which functioned politically with absolute instinctual confidence. The social contract idea ultimately required dictatorship as an occasional and arbitrary means of rescuing society from the confusion of individual wills. In the event of a revolution Napoleon could have become prime minister in England, field marshal in Prussia, and both at once in Spain – with full dictatorial power. Only in France and Italy is he conceivable in the costume of Charlemagne.

In Prussia, however, there existed a true state in the most exacting sense of the word. In Prussia there were, strictly speaking,

no private individuals. Every single person who lived in this system, which functioned with the precision of a good machine, was an integral member of that system. For this reason the task of administration could not be assigned to private individuals, as the parliamentary system prescribes. Administration of public funds was an official function, and the politicians responsible for it were state officials, servants of the commonwealth. In England business and politics were synonymous; in France the swarm of professional politicians called into office by the constitution had become hirelings of the business interests. In Prussia the purely professional politician has always been a disreputable figure.

When, therefore, the democratisation of government became unavoidable in the Nineteenth century, the English pattern had to be shunned since it was contrary to the Prussian style. Here, democracy could not mean private freedom, for that was tantamount to commercial license and would have led to a form of private politics that would use the state as a tool. The knightly ideal of "all for all" underwent a modern reinterpretation – but not in the sense of forming parties that reached down to the masses every few years, giving them the privilege of either voting for a party-endorsed candidate or not voting at all, while the party itself, if it was in the "opposition," reached upward to interfere with the work of government. Rather, the "all for all" principle took the form in Prussia of assigning to every individual, depending on his practical, moral, and intellectual abilities, a certain measure of command and obedience. That is to say, each citizen was allotted a very personal rank and degree of responsibility, and like an official post it was revocable.

This was the *Rdtesystem* as planned a century ago by Baron von Stein. It was a genuinely Prussian idea, based on the principles of selectivity, co-responsibility, and professional loyalty. In the meantime, however, it has been forced in thoroughly Marxian fashion into the miasma of class egoism. Today it is an exact mirror-image of the picture drawn by Marx of the piratical English capitalist class, the Vikings who operated outside the limits of state control. It is a free-trade system, English through and through, but turned upside down: the working classes are now the "society." That is Bentham, not Kant.

Stein and his Kantian advisors wished to organise the

occupational groups. In a country where work should be the universal duty and the meaning of life itself, individuals will differ not in wealth but in accomplishment. Thus Stein envisioned local professional guilds, arranged according to the relative importance of each occupation in the society as a whole. He wanted a representative hierarchy, capped by the State Council; mandates at all levels were to be revocable at any time.[11] His plans called for neither organised parties, career politicians, nor periodic elections. To be sure, Stein never expressed these thoughts; he might indeed have rejected them in this form. But they were tacitly present in the reforms he suggested. And they would have permitted a systematic democratisation of the Prussian government in harmony with Prussian and not English or French instincts, guaranteeing at the same time that the appropriate personalities would be selected for work in the new system. Just as a machine needs a trained engineer to maintain it, a true state needs a State Council. The non-state, on the other hand, requires a privy council, composed of the various parties but constituted in similar fashion to the State Council. Each party must, of course, be prepared to have its own apparatus serve as the country's governing body. England in fact possesses two "workers' councils" or crown councils instead of one – that is the meaning of parliamentarism. What the Prussian system required was a single council with a stable membership.

Instead, under the impression of Napoleonic events the admiration of English institutions became dominant. Hardenberg, Humboldt, and the others were "Englishmen."[12] They listened to Shaftesbury and Hume, and not to Kant. It was imperative that the reforms take place from within the Prussian system, but they were imposed in fact from the outside. All of the political frustration of the nineteenth century, all the boundless sterility of our parliamentary system, all the lack of manpower, ideas, and accomplishments, all the constant conflict between hostile factions and violent pressures, are the direct result of the imposition of a rigorous and humanly profound political system onto a people gifted for a completely different, if equally rigorous and profound, political order. In those areas where the Old Prussian talent for organisation was put to the test in a large enough context – as in the creation of the syndicates and cartels, the trade unions, and in the field of social welfare – it more than proved its mettle.

The indifference that has greeted the elections and the debates on suffrage, despite the efforts of parties and press, shows how alien the parliamentary system is to the Prussian and, since 1870, the German people. When a Prussian or German has made use of his voting franchise it has quite often been merely his way of expressing a vague annoyance. In no other country have these election days *a Vanglaise* yielded such a false picture of actual political sentiment. The masses have never gotten used to this exotic technique of "cooperation," and never will. When an Englishman fails to follow the proceedings of Parliament, he does so with the knowledge that that body will look after his best interests. When a German does likewise, he does so with a feeling of complete apathy. For him the only reality is *die Regierung*.[13] With us, parliamentarism will always be a conglomeration of externals.

In England both parties had long been the sovereign initiators and leaders of policy. But in Prussia there existed a state, and the parties, founded for reasons of parliamentary protocol, became merely critics of the state, whereas in England the functions of the parties were a direct outgrowth of the actual configuration of the people as a commercial entity. In Prussia there was from the beginning a false relationship between the system that was intended and the one that already existed, between plan and effect, between the parties in theory and in practice. The opposition is a necessary and integral part of government in England; it performs a complementary function. Our opposition is truly a negation, of the government itself as well as of the other parties. The removal of the monarchy has not changed things a bit.

It is significant and characteristic of the strength of the national instinct that the two parties which can be called specifically Prussian, the Conservatives and the Socialists, have never lost their anti-liberal and anti-parliamentarian tendencies. They are both socialistic in a higher sense, and therefore they correspond quite closely to the two capitalistic parties in England. Recognising neither private nor party interests as the leaders of government, they ascribe to the totality the unconditional authority, the leadership of the individual in the general interest. The fact that one of these parties speaks of the monarchic state while the other speaks of the working people proves to be only a verbal distinction when we consider that in our country everyone works, and that the

will of the individual is subject at all times to the will of the totality. Both of these parties were, under the pressure of the English system, states within the state. According to their own convictions they were the state, and thus did not recognise the need for any other party to exist besides themselves. But this is quite enough to preclude parliamentary government. They did not deny their military predilections; they organised exclusive, well-disciplined battalions of voters, in which the Conservatives made better officers, the Socialists better troops. They were structured along lines of command and obedience, and that is the way they conceived of their state, the Hohenzollern state, and the state of the future. Freedom, in the "English" sense, prevailed neither in the one nor in the other state. Despite their truly parliamentary effectiveness they harboured a profound contempt for the English parliamentary attitude which accorded rank in society by measuring wealth. Both parties despised the Prussian system of suffrage with its frustrating hierarchy of rich and poor – the Conservatives perhaps less so, but they regarded it only as a tolerably effective means to an end. Yet they scorned any system of suffrage based on the English pattern, for they knew that it necessarily leads to plutocracy. Whoever is willing to pay for such a system can harvest its fruits.

Besides the Conservatives and the Socialists, Prussia also has had its Spanish-style Ultramontane party, the party whose spiritual tradition extends back to the age of Habsburg hegemony and the territorial stipulations of the Peace of Westphalia. This party secretly worships Napoleon as the founder of the Rhenish Confederation. Its tactics are reminiscent of the masterly cabinet diplomacy of Madrid and Vienna. With the mature shrewdness of the Counter-Reformation it has succeeded in harnessing democratic tendencies and parliamentary procedures for its own purposes. It despises nothing – in fact, it is able to gain a little something from every eventuality. And one must not forget the socialist training and discipline of the Spanish spirit, which like the Prussian originated in the knightly orders of the Gothic period and which, even earlier than the Prussians, had epitomised a universal principle in the phrase "Throne and Altar."

Germany's spiritual Englishness eventually constituted itself as a party dedicated to promulgating parliamentarism with the fervour

of a *Weltanschauung*, as a *Prinzip*, an *Idee*, as a *Ding an sich*.[14] For these people Napoleon was the emissary of libertarian ideals. They have mustered up "ethical convictions" at times when the English would exercise their talent and experience. Their symbol is the political "standpoint." When three liberals get together they form a new party; that is their idea of individualism. They never join a bowling club without introducing as part of the "agenda" an "amendment of the statutes." Because a stateless order of public affairs prevails in England, they are enraged at every authoritarian act of government. Even the authoritarian aims of socialism make them shudder.

This *bügerliche*[15] outlook is a specifically German phenomenon. One should not have mistaken it for the French bourgeoisie or, even less, for the English middle-class. The grand style of English liberalism fits it poorly. *Quod licet Jovi non licet bovi*.[16] Beneath the *Bratenrock*[17] of the German liberal is a heart that still beats to the languid rhythm of the old Reich, and a soul that deplores the realities of modern civilisation. These bookish liberals pile up mountains of literature about "transcendency" and "ideality" (something different in every book) that claims to interpret keenly realistic English ideas. Without the English ideas, of course, these people would be defenceless against truly Prussian ideals, which are just as keen and just as unromantic. They are incapable of organisation and therefore politically innocuous in themselves, but they have been mobilised into a militant party by the other caste of German liberals, the group that has taken over from the English one of their ideals without comprehending the fundamental importance it has in the English scheme of things: the economic dictatorship of private wealth. Our "English" liberals have made of their party a murderous opposition that slowly undermines and enervates wherever and whenever the Prussian socialist idea stands in the way of all-powerful business. And finally, it was this brand of liberalism that mobilised the "inner England" of our majority-worshiping parties to perpetrate the parliamentary revolution of 1917, thus assuring victory for "outer England," the Allied powers, by deposing the state itself.

Our liberals demand pure parliamentarism, not because they desire a free state but because they want no state at all, and because they are just as aware as their English counterparts that this foreign

cloak can make a socialistically gifted people incapable of action. The "supranational" cosmopolitanism of the German *Michel* appeals to them. While they may ridicule it as a political goal, they know its value as a political means. They willingly grant the cosmopolitan professors their academic chairs and "cultural" newspaper columns, and encourage parliamentary dilettantes to engage in politics on the editorial pages and in the assembly halls. With this pair in harness they are assiduously driving their political carriage toward perfect Englishness. In the German Revolution socialism suffered its bitterest defeat; its opponents forced it to turn its own weapons on itself.

In spite of all this, the two great universal principles continue to oppose each other: dictatorship of money or of organizational talent, the world as booty or as a true state, wealth or political authority, success or vocation. Both of Germany's socialistic parties must unite against the one enemy of the idea that they share: our inner England, capitalism and parliamentary liberalism.

Socialist monarchy[18] – that is an idea that has slowly matured in the Faustian world and has long since reared its proper human protagonists. Authoritative socialism is by definition monarchistic. The most responsible position in this gigantic organism, in Frederick the Great's words the role of "first servant of the state," must not be abandoned to ambitious privateers. Let us envision a unified nation in which everyone is assigned his place according to his socialistic rank, his talent for voluntary self-discipline based on inner conviction, his organisational abilities, his work potential, consciousness, and energy, his intelligent willingness to serve the common cause. Let us plan for general work conscription, resulting in occupational guilds that will administrate and at the same time be guided by an administrative council, and not by a parliament. A fitting name for this administrative body, in a state where everyone has a job, be it army officer, civil servant, farmer, or miner, might well be "labour council."[19]

Contrary to this idea is the vision of a capitalistic World Republic. For England is a "republic," although today the word means government by the successful private individual who can pay for his election and therefore also for his influence. The World Republicans dream of the earth as a hunting ground for those who want to get rich and who demand for themselves the right to

engage in hand-to-hand combat. Eventually the Tories and Whigs, the two capitalist parties, will band together against the "inner Prussia" of socialism, which in England cannot even claim the undivided support of the workers – work being, of course, a misfortune in the British Isles. This means that the parliamentary system will undergo a structural change, for it cannot function with three parties. In early England it was rich against rich, one philosophy against another within the upper class. Now it will be rich against poor, England against something else.[20] But that is the same as saying that parliamentarism as a political scheme is worn out; of this there can be no doubt. It was already in decline when German fools brought it over here. Its best era was before Bismarck. It was an old, mature, distinguished, highly refined method, and to master it completely required all the tact of the aristocratic English "gentleman." It required fundamental agreement on a sufficient number of problems to ensure that "politeness" would not be endangered. The protocol of parliamentary debate resembled that of a duel between noblemen. Like the music of the period between Bach and Beethoven, it was based on the perfect mastery of formal principles. As soon as this formalism was abandoned the music became barbaric. Today no one is able to dash off an old-style fugue as could the classical composers. So it is also with the fugue-like form of parliamentary tactics. Coarser people, coarser questions – and it is all over. The duel becomes a brawl. The institutions, the sense of tact and cautious observance of the amenities, are dying out with the old-style people of good breeding.

The new parliamentarism will present the struggle for existence with barely civilized manners and with much poorer success. The relationship between party leaders and party, between party and masses, will be tougher, more transparent, and more brazen. That is the beginning of Caesarism. Hints of its arrival were present in the English elections of 1918. Nor shall we Germans escape it either. It is our destiny, just as it was the destiny of Rome and China, indeed of all mature cultures. But – billionaires or generals, bankers or civil servants of the highest quality? That is the eternal question.[21]

IV. Marx

-19-

The intense final struggle of the two Germanic ideas is now strongly affected by a wholly different factor, the labour problem. On the one side a philosophical dichotomy of the most inward sort is striving toward a resolution that will give Faustian man's existence its final unified pattern. On the other side a physical state of emergency is demanding changes in external living conditions. The former is thus a question of metaphysics, the latter one of political economics. We must bear in mind this qualitative difference between the two phenomena.

The problem of the "fourth estate" is that it makes its appearance in every culture during the transition to civilization. In Germany this began in the nineteenth century; suddenly Rousseau was obsolete. The third estate belonged to the city, which placed itself on even footing with the farmlands; the fourth estate was a product of the megalopolis, which annihilated the farmlands. A very late phenomenon in any given culture, the fourth estate is composed of nomad-like masses which, formless and indeed hostile to all form, surge through the stony labyrinths choking up the remainders of living humanity. It is a homeless and frustrated group, filled with hatred of the strict gradations of the old culture that is unwilling to recognise it, and longing for liberation from its impossible plight.[22]

Western European civilisation, in all its forms and manifestations, is dominated by machine industry. The industrial worker is not at all the "fourth estate," and yet he justifiably considers himself a representative of that group. He is a symbol. As a type he originated in this civilisation and he deeply feels the anomaly of his existence. If others are slaves of the age of technology, the businessman as well as the engineer, then he is the slave.

But there is no solution to the labour problem for the worker alone or by him alone. Strictly speaking, the fourth estate is a simple fact, not an idea. And in the face of facts there can be only

material compromises – not as the effect or realisation of an ideal, but as the strategic result of a pragmatic struggle for advantages over others. In the end, following all the accidents and vagaries of the struggle, one attains and resignedly accepts what amounts to a deadlock that affords a certain measure of passive well-being – a Chinese kind of happiness, the happiness of Imperial Rome: *panem et cir censes*. It is difficult to imagine that today, for we stand at the high point of mass excitement in the big cities, and, as a result of all the slogan-barking, close-range observers have tended to overestimate the prospects of class egoism. But in one or two centuries all this will pass, unless the labour movement enters the service of a general idea. What remained of the high passion of the period of the Gracchi during Augustus' reign? The problem had not been solved, it had only dissolved.

This is where Marx comes in. By means of a brilliant intellectual calculation – more overwhelming than correct – he tried to elevate facts to the rank of an idea. Across the powerful antithesis between Viking and knightly principles he stretched out a thin but cohesive theory, thereby inventing a popular view of history that is in fact widely accepted in the present day. He was born in the Prussian atmosphere, and later entered the atmosphere of England, but he remained a foreigner to the spiritual life of both peoples. As a citizen of the scientific nineteenth century he was a good materialist,[23] but a bad psychologist. And therefore he failed ultimately to impart the quality of an idea to the great realities. Instead, he reduced ideas to concepts and single interests. Instead of the English blood which he did not feel within himself, he espied only English things and concepts. And of Hegel, who by and large represented Prussianism at its best, the only thing accessible to Marx was the method.

Thus it happened that, by means of a truly grotesque calculation, he transformed the instinctual dichotomy between the two Germanic races into the material dichotomy between two class levels. To the "proletariat," the fourth estate, he ascribed the Prussian idea of socialism, while to the "bourgeoisie," the third estate, he assigned the English idea of capitalism. These are the false equations that have given rise to the four concepts whose concrete meaning everyone is familiar with today. With these catchwords, so irresistible in their simplicity, he succeeded in

consolidating the labour force of practically all countries into a class possessing a distinct class-consciousness. Today the fourth estate talks in his language and thinks in his concepts. “Proletariat,” after Marx, was no longer a name but a challenge. Beginning with Marx the future was seen through a piece of literature. The strength of the system lies in its superficiality. There still exists a Spanish-ecclesiastical, an English-capitalistic, and a Prussian-authoritative socialism, in addition to proletarian movements of anarchic, capitalistic, and genuinely socialistic character; but no one is aware of them. Faith in the unified nature of the goal is stronger than reality, and this faith, as always in the Western world, adheres to a book. To doubt its absolute truth is a crime. It was the printed word that first guaranteed that the Faustian spirit would exert its influence beyond all limits of space and time. In the English Revolution it was the Bible, in the French Revolution, Rousseau’s *Contrat social*, in the German Revolution the *Communist Manifesto*.

From his reinterpretation of racial strife as the strife between classes, and of ancient Germanic instincts as very recent impulses of large-city populations, Marx derived his central concept of “class conflict.” The horizontal structuring of historical forces was made vertical; that is the meaning of the materialist view of history. The scientific mentality of the time required that matter and energy be regarded as opposites. The “matter” of political “energy” as peoples and nations; that of economic “energy” was the classes. Marxism reversed the importance of these two “energies,” and thus also of the two “matters.” And the word “class” thereby took on a completely new meaning. With the psychological naiveté of a scientifically trained mind of 1850, Marx failed to comprehend the difference between class and estate. An estate is an ethical concept, the expression of an idea. The privileged segment of society in 1789 was distinguished from the bourgeoisie as an estate embodying the formal ideal of *grandeur*, *courtoisie*, and inward and outward nobility, no matter how much had been eroded by decadent living. It was only after the bourgeoisie had contested the ethical superiority of the older aristocratic modes of behaviour that it made an issue of social privileges. The Parisians used their English-schooled intelligence to substitute a new ideal for the old, and their French instinct created out of this substitution the principle of equality in the ethical sense. This was the new meaning of the expression “human society”: equality of all men, and the universal

binding force of a moral ideal based not on blood and tradition but on nature and reason.

"Class," on the other hand, is a purely economic concept, and in 1850 it took the place of the ethical and political concept of the "bourgeoisie" of 1789. The ideal of estates became class interest. It was only in England that the classes had long since been stratified according to wealth. The middle class was comprised of those who lived by their work without actually being poor. The upper class was rich without working. The lower class worked and was poor. In Prussia, however, it was rank, i.e., a greater or lesser degree of command and obedience, that separated the classes. Besides the peasantry there existed a civil-servant class – that is to say, there was a unity of function[24] rather than economic distinctions. By way of contrast, modern France is distinguished by the absence of real classes. The French nation is a disordered mass in which one can discern rich individuals and poor individuals, yet classes as such have not emerged. The entire nation is one class, not as rigorously stratified as the Germanic nations, but nonetheless single and unified.

Marx was thus an exclusively English thinker. His two-class system derives from the situation of a mercantile people that sacrificed its agriculture to big business, and that never had possessed a national corps of civil servants with a pronounced, i.e., Prussian, estate-consciousness. In England there were only "bourgeoisie" and "proletarians," active and passive agents in business affairs, robbers and robbed – the whole system very Viking-like. Transferred to the realm of Prussian political ideals, these concepts make no sense. Marx would never have been able to distinguish English industrial slavery from the principle that emerges from the "all for all" idea, whereby every individual is a servant of the total state regardless of rank or position. He took a wholly external image of Prussianism – organisation, discipline, cooperation, all things that are independent of any single class; a technical pattern, socialism – and handed it over to the labourers in a "society" of the English type as a weapon and a goal, exhorting them to be good Vikings and switch the roles of robbers and robbed, to expropriate the expropriators. And he wrapped it all up in an egoistic program that called for the sharing of the spoils after victory.

The best definition of the two classes is still logical embarrassment. Within the Marxist system, “bourgeois” means something completely different than it did to Rousseau. It is one thing if one uses the term in the context of privileged groups in the Age of Feudalism, and quite another if it applies to the masses of urban workers. Consequently, with respect to the three estates of 1789 there is no longer any fourth estate, and with respect to today’s fourth estate there is no first or second. Sieyes[25] estimated the clergy at 80,000, the aristocracy at 120,000, and the third estate at 25,000,000. Accordingly, the latter group constituted “the people.” “Bourgeoisie” means “all together.” Even the French peasant is a “bourgeois.”

The fourth estate, however, is a minority and difficult to separate from the others. The dividing lines are different, depending on whether one speaks of craftsmen, industrial workers, proletarians, or masses. At times it is defined, and more often still it is felt, as differing hardly at all from the “bourgeoisie.” Once again, it is “all together” with the exception of the business employers.

The third estate was in point of fact a negative concept. It was invented to express the idea that there should no longer be any estates at all. But the fourth estate cancels out this calculation. It assigns to a single occupational group the prime importance in the life of society. It reached back beyond 1789 and presents itself as another privileged estate. That is what the notion of dictatorship of the proletariat essentially means: the domination of society by a class that is not at all certain of its numerical superiority. This means, of course, that the Marxist class goal is in reality a caricature of the old estate ideal. The entire Marxist construct is nothing but literature, and has nothing to do with blood or breeding. But the follies of the German Revolution, the “workers’ Soviets” as a new upper house, the elevation of the workers to the position of English “gentlemen” by means of a strike that guaranteed continued wage payments – all this has demonstrated, as in the days of Cromwell and Robespierre, that literature can engender, temporarily at least, grotesque reality.

-20-

Marxian morality is likewise of English origin. Marxism reveals in

every sentence that the thought processes from which it sprang were theological and not political. Its economic theory is the outgrowth of a fundamental moral attitude, and the materialistic view of history is simply the final chapter of a philosophy with roots in the English Revolution, whose biblical moods have remained dominant in English thought.

That is why Marx's basic concepts are felt to be moral alternatives. The words "socialism" and "capitalism" are terms for the good and evil of this irreligious religion. The "bourgeois" is the devil, the wage earner is the angel of a new mythology, and one need only sample the vulgar paths of the *Communist Manifesto* to recognise behind the literary mask the Christianity of the Independents.[26] Social evolution is "the will of God." The "final goal," in an earlier age, was eternal salvation; the "collapse of bourgeois Civilisation" used to be called the Last Judgment.

Marx succeeded in preaching contempt for work. Perhaps he did not realise this himself.[27] Work – long, hard, tiring work – is for Marx a misfortune, and effortless gain a blessing.[28] Behind the typically English disdain for the man who lives by the sweat of his brow we can feel the instinct of the Viking, whose vocation is piracy and not patching sails. For this reason the manual labourer is more a slave in England than anywhere else. And his slavery is moral; he feels that his profession precludes his bearing the title of "gentleman." The concepts "bourgeoisie" and "proletariat" reflect the typically English preference for business rather than manual work. The former is a blessing, the latter a calamity; the one is noble, the other base. But with their hatred the misfortunate ones say, "Business is the evil occupation, manual labour the good."

This is the explanation for the mental attitude which gave rise to Marx's social criticism and which has made him so catastrophic for true socialism. He knew the nature of work only from the English viewpoint, as a means of getting rich, as a means lacking in all moral depth. Only success and money, the visible and tangible signs of God's grace, were of ethical import. The Englishman has no inkling of the dignity of hard work. For him, work is a debasing thing, an ugly necessity. Pity the poor soul who has nothing but work, who owns nothing without more and more work, but who above all will never have wealth in the future! Had Marx understood the meaning of Prussian work, of activity for its own

sake, of service in the name of the totality, for ‘all together” and not for oneself, of duty that ennobles regardless of the kind of work performed – had he been able to comprehend these things, his *Manifesto* would probably never have been written.

On this matter he was aided by his Jewish instinct, which he himself characterised in his essay on the Jewish question.[29] The curse on physical labour pronounced in the beginning of *Genesis*, the prohibition against defiling the Sabbath by work – these things made him receptive to the Old Testament pathos of the English sensibility.[30] Hence his hatred of those who do not need to work. The socialism of a Fichte would accuse such people of sloth, it would brand them as irresponsible, dispensable shirkers and parasites. But Marxian instinct envies them. They are too well-off, and therefore they should be revolted against. Marx has inoculated his proletariat with a contempt for work. His fanatical disciples wish to destroy all culture in order to decrease the amount of indispensable work. Martin Luther praised the simplest manual activity as pleasing to God; Goethe wrote of the “demands of the day.” Yet Marx dreamed of the proletarian Phaeacian who would own everything without any effort. That is, after all, the meaning of the Expropriation of the Blessed. And as far as English instinct is concerned he was right. What the Englishman calls bliss – business success that saves physical work and makes one a gentleman – is good for all Englishmen. For us it is obscene. It smacks of mobs and snobs.

This kind of ethics informs his economic thinking. It is the Manchester school[31] all over again. It is exactly like the thinking of Cobden, who at the very same time was leading the Whig free-trade theory to victory. Marx opposed the form of capitalism that derived its justification from Bentham and Shaftesbury and was formulated by Adam Smith. But since he was a critic only, negative and uncreative, he took over his principles from the very thing he was fighting.

Work was for him a commodity, not an obligation. That is the core of his political economics. His ethics were the ethics of big business. Not that business is unethical; but we can read between the lines his opinion that the labourer is a fool not to engage in it. And labourers have understood him. The battle for higher wages became a kind of investment speculation: the worker was now a

merchant selling his product, work. The trick about Marx's famous "surplus value" thesis is that it was considered as spoils to be carried off by the successful merchant from the opponent's stores. It was not to be presented to him for nothing. Class egoism thus became a universal principle. The labourers not only wanted to do business, he wanted to corner the whole market. The true Marxist is hostile to the state, and for the very same reason as the Whig: it hinders him in the ruthless exercise of his private business interests. Marxism is the capitalism of the working class. Consider Darwin, who was just as important to Marx as Malthus and Cobden. Business is conceived of throughout as a struggle for existence. In industry the employer engages in commerce with the commodity "money," while the worker does likewise with the commodity "work." Marx wished to deprive capital of the right to private profit, but the only thing he could think of as a substitute was the worker' s right to private profit. That is unsocialistic, but it is typically English.[32]

Marx became an Englishman on one other score as well: in his mind the state does not exist. He thought statelessly, in terms of "society." Like parliamentary practice in England, his economic world functions as a two-party system with nothing above the parties. Within his scheme there can be only combat and no arbitration, only victory or defeat, only the dictatorship of one of the two parties. *The Communist Manifesto* calls for a dictatorship of the "good" proletarian party over the "evil" capitalist party. Marx saw no alternatives.

The Prussian socialist state exists beyond this "good" and "evil." It is the whole people, and in the face of its absolute authority the two Marxian parties are simply parties – minorities that serve the common good. From a strictly technical viewpoint, socialism is the principle of public service. In the final analysis every worker has the status not of a businessman, but of a public servant, as does every employer. There are public servants of industry, commerce, traffic, and the military. This system was realised in the grandest style in Egyptian culture and again, though quite differently, in China. It represents the inner form of Western political civilisation, and it already became manifest in the Gothic cities with their professional guilds and corporations. A symbolic expression of the system was the Gothic cathedral, in which every element was a necessary part of the dynamic whole. Marx was unable to

comprehend this. His imagination and creative talent extended only so far as to convert a “society” of private businessmen into a “society” of private workers. As a critic he was first-rate; as a creator he was impotent. This is proved by his constant retreat from the question of how he imagined the form government would take in his gigantic universal mechanism, and by his dilettantish praise of the Parisian “council system” of 1871, which originated under the extraordinary conditions of a besieged city but was powerless anyway. One cannot learn how to be creative by reading Marx. Either one is creative or one is not. The Social Democracy of the nineteenth century produced but one grand-style creative personality, a politician who didn’t write but who knew how to govern: August Bebel. He was definitely not the most intellectual member of his party, but he was its one and only organiser. A true ruler needs talents other than intellect in the literary sense. Napoleon did not tolerate any “book writers” in his entourage.

The economic Darwinism of the Englishman, together with the Marxian two-class system, led to the adoption of the natural weapon to be used in the war between the real merchants and the merchandising labourers: the strike. By means of the strike, the commodity “work” is withheld from the buyer. By means of the opponent’s strike, the lockout, the commodity “money” is withheld from the buyer. A reserve army of workers secures the market for the buyers of money, while a reserve army of employers (labour shortage) does the same for the buyers of work. The strike is the most unsocialistic aspect of Marxism. It is the classical sign of its origins in a businessman’s philosophy that Marx adhered to by instinct and habit.

In the true state, work is not a commodity but a duty toward the common interest, and there is no gradation – this is Prussian-style democratisation – of ethical values among the various kinds of work. The judge and the scholar perform “work” just as the miner and the lathe operator. In our German Revolution it was English thinking that planned for the worker to expropriate the rest of the people by squeezing as much money as possible out of the least amount of work, and by lauding his “commodity” above all others. One of the preconditions of a strike is that the people exist only as parties, not as a state. Another Marxist, that is to say English, idea is the open negotiation for wage increases, and the unilateral

determination of wage scales following the success of the proletarian party.

The Prussian way of doing things is for the state to determine wages impartially for each kind of work, planning the scales carefully according to the total economic situation at any given time, in the interest of all the people and not of any one profession. That is the principle of salary scales for civil servants, made to apply to all occupations. It includes the prohibition of the strike, for it regards this as a private commercial device inimical to state interests. The power to set wage scales is removed from both employer and employee and becomes the privilege of a general economic council, thus ensuring that each party will operate within the same firm boundaries as they have had to in other areas of management and work practice.

With reference to Prussian-socialist man's inborn political patterns, Marxism is senseless. Marxism can deny and perhaps weaken these patterns, but like everything that is vital and natural they will prove stronger than all theory. Marx's scheme is most at home in England. There it is better understood than true socialism, and the actual commencement of hostilities between the economic parties has brought old-style parliamentarism to an end. The two parties of wealth formed by the upper class were politically constituted, and were in basic agreement on economic questions. Even when in mid-century, during the final stages of classical parliamentarism, the battle was fought over the free-trade system and the Whigs emerged victorious, the combatants at all times adhered to the traditional proprieties. Tories and Whigs differed only in that they favoured either war and conquest or commercial infiltration, courage or piratical cunning. Now, however, an economic antithesis has caused the appearance of two new parties, a money party and a work party, and this battle can no longer be fought with parliamentary methods. The point at issue is no longer a formality; it is now a matter of concrete things, and as long as the English are unwilling to yield to the foreign principle of the state as an impartial authority, the only possible outcome is the complete suppression of one economic party by the other.

Marx took his particular image of industrial England, an image that was very schematic indeed and seen from a very questionable perspective, and by a quick change of focus made it extend over all of history. He claimed that his economic calculations were valid for all of "human society," adding that they were in fact the only important element in the entire course of history. In doing this he resembled Darwin, who likewise proceeded from Malthus and asserted that his theories were valid for "all organisms," whereas in reality they hold only for the highly developed anthropoids. His system becomes absurd when one tries to make such details as selection, mimicry, and heredity conform to the life history of bacteria or corals.

The materialist view of history, which postulates economic conditions as "cause" (in the physical sense) and religion, laws, customs, art, and science as "effect," doubtless has its persuasive aspects in this late period of Western culture, for it appeals to the mentality of irreligious and traditionless urban people. Not because economic conditions are in fact a "cause," but because art and religion have become empty, lifeless, and external, and because they now linger on as the pale shadow of the only strongly developed form that identifies our age. Precisely this state of affairs is symptomatically English; the notion of religion as "cant," of art as "comfort" for the upper class and as alms for the lower ("art for the masses") has accompanied the English style of living during its infiltration of other countries.

Hegel stands above, Marx below the level of historical actuality. Take away Hegel's metaphysics and you will discover a political thinker with a sense of reality unequalled in modern philosophy. As a "Prussian" by intellectual choice he placed the state at the centre of his extraordinarily profound, well-nigh Goethean vision of historical development, whereas Marx, the Englishman by choice, assigned to the economic life the central role in his Darwinian and mechanistic theory of historical "evolution" (he would call it "progress"). According to Hegel the state is the creative force of history, and history means politics. He never used the term "human society." The higher state officials of Bismarck's generation were mostly Hegelians. Marx, on the other hand, conceived of history without the state as an arena for jousting parties, as a conflict of private economic interests. The materialist concept is the English

concept of history; it reflects the countenance of that independent nation of Vikings and businessmen.

But the intellectual and spiritual preconditions for this mode of thought no longer exist. The nineteenth century was the century of natural science; the twentieth century belongs to psychology. We no longer believe in the power of reason over life. We feel that life controls reason. Familiarity with the ways of human beings is more important to us than general and abstract ideals. We have lost our optimism and become sceptics. What concerns us is not what ought to be, but what shall be. Rather than be slaves of ideals, we want to be able to control reality. The logic of natural science, the concatenation of cause and effect, seems to us superficial; the only thing that can testify to the profundity of historical change is the logic of organic existence: Destiny and an Instinct that can be felt and seen as an all-powerful agent in the historical process.

Marxism is an ideology. That this is so is evident from the way it divides up history, a technique adopted by the materialists after the strength of Christian faith had waned. The evolutionary path leads, for them, from antiquity via the Middle Ages to modern times, and at the end we are to decry the perfect Marxist ideal, the earthy Paradise.[33] It is senseless to try to contradict this image. Our task is to give modern man a new perspective that will necessarily produce a new image. Life has no "goal." Mankind has no "goal." The existence of this universe, in which we humans play off a tiny episode on our little planet, is much too majestic a thing to be explained by such puny slogans as "happiness for the largest number." The greatness of the universal drama lies in its aimlessness. Goethe was aware of this. What we are called upon to do is to render the greatest possible meaning to the life that has been granted us, to the reality that surrounds us and into which Destiny has placed us. We must live in such a way that we can be proud of ourselves. We must act in such a way that some part of us will live on in the process of reality that is heading toward eventual completion. We are not "human beings *an sich*." That was a factor in yesterday's ideology. "Cosmopolitanism" is a wretched word. We are persons of a particular century, a particular nation, a particular circle, a particular type. These are the necessary conditions under which we can give meaning and depth to existence, by being doers, even if we do with words. The more we fill out the area within

these given boundaries, the greater will be our effect. Plato was an Athenian, Caesar a Roman, Goethe a German. That they were so first and foremost is the reason for their universal and timeless importance.

It is with this knowledge that today, in the midst of the German Revolution, we can point to Marxism and socialism as opposing forces. Socialism, i.e., Prussianism as it is not yet understood, is a real entity of the highest order. Marxism is literature. Literature can become obsolete; reality either conquers or dies. We need only compare socialist criticism as it is heard at international conventions with but one socialist fact, the party of August Bebel. The popular phrase about ideas making history, when understood as it should be, is nothing but the special pleading of literary gossips. Ideas cannot be expressed. An artist can see them, a thinker can feel them, a statesman or soldier can make them real. Ideas become conscious only through the blood – instinctively, not by means of abstract contemplation. They make their existence known by the life style of peoples, the symbolism of deeds and accomplishments. And whether or not people are aware of them, either correctly or falsely, is a trifling matter. Life is of first and last importance, and life has no system, no program, and no reason. It exists for and by itself, and the profound orderliness with which it manifests itself can only be felt or envisioned – and then perhaps described, but not analysed in terms of good and evil, right and wrong, desirable and undesirable.

For this reason Marxism is not a true idea. It combines in rational, i.e., arbitrary fashion the visible symbols and patterns of two ideas. The entire method of Marxist thinking is a thing of the moment. It is effective because every people has employed its concepts as weapons. Whether or not they have been correctly understood is unimportant. They are effective because the sound of words and the force of oratory have made people believe in something. What they have believed in is, once again, the immutable idea of their own lives, their own blood.

Today Marxism is collapsing amid the clamorous orgy of its attempt to become reality. With the year 1918 the *Communist Manifesto* has entered upon a career as a literary curiosity like that of the *Contrat social* after 1793. True instinctive socialism, the expression of the Old Prussian mode of life, once was carried off on

a literary sojourn to England to be diluted into an anti-English theory; it is now on its way back to an awareness of its origins and its full meaning.

V. The International

-22-

In days to come people will look back with amusement at the thing called “international Socialism” that dominates the political image of the world at present. What we are really witnessing is an International of catchwords, Marxism as a set of vapid slogans. It will be able to arouse feelings of solidarity among the workers of all nations for only a few decades, and with much less intensity than the noisy Socialist conventions and the overconfident public appeals might lead one to believe. Actually this solidarity is limited simply to the belief that it exists, and to the fact that a movement in one country often calls forth a movement in another country. But it is characteristic of a civilisation so completely saturated with literature as our own that leaders of the masses, who live in a perpetual cloud of theory, can nonetheless become the instruments of powerful realities. Representatives of English, French, German, and Russian modes of life foregather at pseudo-political conventions without ever comprehending each other’s basic feelings and desires, and strive to agree on a certain minimal set of principles that they think of as supporting some common cause.

Just how thinly overlaid our other national instinct is by these intellectual realities became clear in August, 1914, when they suddenly vaporised in the course of a single day under the heat of natural and nonintellectual passions. Socialism is something different in every country. There are just as many labour movements as there are vital races in the spiritual sense, and as soon as they have finished their search for things that they hate in common, these movements find that they hate each other just as pitilessly as they hate the peoples they represent. There are Red Jacobins and Red Puritans; there is a Red Versailles and a Red Potsdam. The same gap separates Shaw and Bebel as separates Rhodes and Bismarck. All of them have tailored their garments from the same old theoretical cloth.

In the World War it was not only the Allies who fought against Germany, but also the pseudo-socialism of the Allied nations that

opposed the true Prussian socialism of Germany. By betraying the person of the Kaiser true socialism betrayed itself, its origins, its meaning, and its position in the socialist world. August Bebel would certainly have anticipated and prevented this; his weaker descendants simply did not understand. Now they travel to the sham conventions and virtually sign the Versailles Treaty all over again in their speeches. The most dangerous enemy of Prussian-German socialism is not German capitalism, which at one time bore pronounced socialistic features and which socialism itself has forced into the English camp since 1917. This anglicisation was perhaps most generously abetted by the slackening of our masterfully organised trade unions, and by the introduction of local management councils, which are actually a front for the liberal parliamentarian leanings of our majority- worshiping Socialists.

No, Prussian socialism's worst enemy is not German capitalism; it is what is being done in the name of socialism in the homeland of capitalism. The clear vision of Friedrich Engels detected that the only true socialism is German socialism. Today's spokesmen for socialism have forgotten this, and are trying to prove it to the Allied Socialists by means of Michel-like obsequiousness.

The socialism of French insurrectionists and saboteurs is in reality merely an emotion of social revanche which found its Clemenceaus as early as the Paris Commune uprising. The socialism of England is a revised edition of capitalism. Only in Germany has socialism been a Weltanschauung. The Frenchman remains an anarchist, the Englishman a liberal. French and English workers regard themselves above all as Frenchmen and Englishmen, and only as an afterthought as supporters of the International. The Prussian worker, the only born socialist, has always played fool to the others. He alone has taken the pseudo-socialist language seriously, just as the German professors believed in the Paulskirche speeches.[34] The Prussian worker, the only one who could point to his party as a magnificent creation, became the reverent listener to other men's verbiage and helped pay for their strikes.

A true International is only possible as the victory of the idea of a single race over all the others, and not as the mixture of all separate opinions into one colourless mass.[35] Let us have the courage of our skepticism and throw away the old ideology. In history as it really is, there can be no conciliations. Whoever believes that there can,

must suffer from a chronic terror at the absurd ways in which events do occur, and he is only deceiving himself if he thinks that he can control them by means of treaties. There is but one end to all the conflict, and that is death – the death of individuals, of peoples, of cultures. Our own death still lies far ahead of us in the murky darkness of the next thousand years. We Germans, situated as we are in this century, bound by our inborn instincts to the destiny of Faustian civilisation, have within ourselves rich and untapped resources, but immense obligations as well. To the new International that is now in the irreversible process of preparation we can contribute the ideas of worldwide organisation and the world state; the English can suggest the idea of worldwide exploitation and trusts; the French can offer nothing. We can vouch for our ideas, not with speeches but with our whole existence. The knightly idea of true socialism stands or falls with Prussianism. Only the Church still embodies the old Spanish idea of universality, the care and succour of all nations under the wing of Catholicism. From the days of the Hohenstaufen emperors we can hear the threatening echoes of an immense conflict between a political and a religious universal idea. But at the present moment we are witnessing the triumph of a third idea, the Viking idea: the world not as a state and not as a Church, but as booty for pirates.

The true International is imperialism, domination of Faustian civilisation, i.e., of the whole earth, by a single formative principle, not by appeasement and compromise but by conquest and annihilation. Socialism has beside and against it capitalism and ultramontanism, and thus there are three different forms of the socialist will to power: through the state, through money, and through the Church. Their influence extends throughout the political, economic, and religious consciousness of the Western world, and each seeks to subject the others to its will. They represent the creative instincts of Prussian, English, and Spanish man, which reach back from the frigid heights of our own time to the primitive, impulsive men of the Gothic age who conquered the swamps of the Eastlands with sword and plough, crossed the North Sea in their fragile skiffs, and led the crusade against the Moors south of the Pyrenees. The Gothic manifestations of the East Prussian borderlands, of England, and of Spain have a wholly different spirit from those of France. These instincts are more powerful than anything else, and can even outlive the peoples that

have been their visible symbols. A Roman spirit still prevailed at a time when Romans no longer existed. As a people, the spirit of Spain is powerless, but as a Church it still stands with unbroken strength.

These are the realities which the convention-hopping International thinks it can push aside with the slogans of Karl Marx.

-23-

The worst of these slogans is communism. Its critique touched on a problem of the utmost importance: property. This is not the place to discuss, even in outline, the immense symbolic significance of such difficult matters as the relationship between property and marriage, property and political ideal, or property and world view. On these topics, also, each of these great cultures has spoken its own language. The Western concept of property is far removed from that of antiquity, India, and China. Property is power. Faustian man has little regard for inert, undynamic possessions, for "credit" per se. He emphasises, rather, the importance of "productive" property. The ancient world's sensual delight in the mere accumulation of treasures is rare among us. The pride of the modern conqueror, the merchant and gambler, even of the collector of art works, is based on the idea that by taking his booty he has gained power. The Spaniards' thirst for gold and the Englishmen's hunger for new territories are directed toward property that creates more property.

In contrast to this dynamic concept of property, another view prevailed in the Renaissance and in Paris: the pensioner ideal. The goal of this form of cupidity was not dynamic potential but simple pleasure; not "everything" but "enough"; not deeds but "life." The *condottieri* desired their principalities and court treasuries in order to enjoy to the fullest the leisure culture of their century. The Medici banking house, one of the first in Europe, was far from wanting to control the world market. Louis XIV sent out his generals and tax collectors with the intent of securing material support for his Olympic existence as the "Sun King." The French aristocrats at Versailles were quite thoroughly imbued with the Renaissance outlook. Their culture was anything but dynamic. Traveling Englishmen like Young were amazed to find, just prior to the Revolution, how badly they had managed their wealth. They

were happy if they simply “had” it, and if the intendant saw to the collection of the sums necessary for Parisian life.

This eighteenth-century aristocracy represented the sharpest contrast to the active, acquisitive, and belligerent aristocracy of England and Prussia. The wealth class in France was motivated solely by the desire for self-preservation, and even at the great moments of French history it was unable to gain control of the world market or to engage in authentic colonisation. But the *grandseigneur* of 1750, as a type, is very much the predecessor of the bourgeois of 1850, the harmless pensioner who was a threat only when inspired by national conceit, and whose name Marx never should have chosen to designate capitalistic society.

“Capital” is the grand expression that describes the English view of property. “Capital” means economic energy; it is the armour one puts on before joining the battle for success. Instead of the French cavalier and pensioner, what we see here is the magnate of the stock market, of petroleum or steel, whose pleasure consists in the feeling of economic omnipotence. He understands property to mean exclusively private property. As he sees it, one man’s sniffle can cause the market to plunge all over the world; a telegram of three words can unleash catastrophes on the far side of the planet; and the trade and industry of entire nations are a function of his personal credit. “Private” property – it is important to grasp the term in its full dramatic sense. The billionaire demands absolute freedom to arrange world affairs by his private decisions, with no other ethical standard in mind than success. He beats down his opponents with credit and speculation as his weapons. His state and his army are his trust, and the political state is little more than his agent whom he commissions with wars such as those in Spain or South Africa, or with treaties and peace negotiations. The final goal of these genuine mastertypes is to turn the whole world into one huge trust.[36] As far as he is concerned the average citizen’s nominal right to property can remain inviolate; he can enjoy complete freedom to give away, sell, or bequeath his possessions as he sees fit. But the economic value of his possessions as commercial capital is made to move in certain directions by a remote central agency that is utterly beyond his control. Thus the money magnate is a property owner in a very special sense. Whole peoples and nations can be forced to work according to his tacit command and his

omnipresent will.

This concept of property, a disguise for the businessman's liberalism, is diametrically opposed to the Prussian view. The Prussian sees property not as private booty but as part of the common weal; not as a means or expression of personal power but as goods placed in trust, for the administration of which he, as a property owner, is responsible to the state. He does not regard national wealth as the sum of individual private fortunes; instead, he considers private fortunes as functions of the total economic potential of his nation. We must repeat again and again the magnificent words of Frederick the Great: "I am the first servant of my state." As soon as every individual makes this attitude his own, socialism becomes a fact. There is no sharper contrast to this idea than Louis XIV with his factual statement, "I am the state." Whether on the throne or in the streets, the Western world can conceive of no more blatant contrast than that between Prussianism and Jacobinism, between socialist and anarchist instinct. It is the basis for the ineradicable enmity between our two peoples. Napoleon remarked on St. Helena, "Prussia has been an obstacle to France since the days of Frederic, and will always remain so. It was the greatest obstacle to the plans I had for France."

For truly, the manner in which the French labourer turns his desire for revenge on the moneyed class is the very opposite of socialism; it is communism in the real sense. Even the French labourer wants to be a pensioner. He despises the leisure of the others which he cannot obtain for himself. His goal is an equality of pleasure, equal opportunity for life as a pensioner. This is the idea behind the famous and typically French equation coined by Proudhon: "Property is theft." In France property does not mean power, it means the acquired opportunity for pleasure. Common possession of goods rather than separation of the means of production into corporations, distribution of wealth ("All belongs to all") rather than the use of value-shaping forces to create trusts – that is the French ideal as opposed to the English. It is embodied in the socialist Utopia of Fourier: disbandment of the state into small communal units or "phalansteries" whose aim is the greatest possible pleasure with the least amount of work.

Robert Owen attempted to formulate as a kind of reform of capital the desire of the English lower class to adopt for itself the

upper-class ideal of property. But it would be a gross underestimation of the Viking instinct to think that English-American capital will retreat one step on the path toward absolute economic domination of the world. Unlimited personal freedom and the natural inequality of man, based on relative degrees of individual talent, are the fundamental articles of the Anglo-Saxon creed. Instead of authoritarian socialism, the English or American billionaire adheres to an impressive form of private socialism, a welfare program on a grand scale which turns his own personal power into pleasure and morally vanquishes the recipient of welfare funds. The flashy techniques for distributing these millions are an effective cover-up for the methods used to obtain them in the first place. It is the same attitude as that of the old corsairs who, while banqueting in the castle just conquered, threw their table scraps to the prisoners: the voluntary surrender of property increases the value of what remains. The question whether or not such voluntary acts should become a legal duty is the chief point of contention among the economic parties of the future in England and America. Today some people are prepared to transfer broad economic areas that are less amenable to speculation, such as the mining and railroad industries, to the case of a pseudo-state. But of course they intend to retain the behind-the-scenes prerogative of making this "state" an executive organ of their own business interests by utilising the democratic forms of parliamentarism, i.e., by paying for election campaigns and newspapers and thus controlling the opinions of voters and readers.

Therein lies the frightful danger of an enslavement of the world by big business. Today its tool is the League of Nations, ostensibly a system of nations that have "self- Government" on the English model, but in reality a system of provinces and protectorates whose populations are being exploited by a business oligarchy with the aid of bribed parliaments and purchased laws,[37] just as the Roman world was exploited by the bribery of senators, proconsuls, and popular tribunes. Marx saw through this nascent system, and it became the target of his caustic social criticism. He wished to depose the English idea of omnipotent private property, but once again he was able to formulate only a negation: expropriation of the expropriators, robbery of the robbers.

Nevertheless, this Old English principle contains something of

the Prussian imperative: maintain full Germanic respect for property, but award the power inherent in it to the state, and not to the individual. That is the meaning of socialisation. It was systematically pursued by Prussian governments that functioned on instinct untrammelled by theory, from the civil and war chambers of Frederick William I to the social welfare institutions of Bismarck. But the orthodox and heterodox Marxists of the German Revolution have tried to outdo each other in spoiling it all. Socialisation does not mean nationalisation by expropriation or theft. It is not all concerned with nominal property, but rather with the techniques of administration. Buying up industries right and left for the sake of some slogan, and handing them over to administrative bodies incognisant of the ways of large enterprises instead of leaving them to the responsibility and initiative of their owners, is the surest way to pervert true socialism. The Old Prussian method was to legislate the formal structure of the total productive potential while guarding carefully the right to property and inheritance, and to allow so much freedom to personal talent, energy, initiative, and intellect as one might allow a skilled chess player who had mastered all the rules of the game. This is largely how it was done with the old cartels and syndicates, and there is no reason why it could not be systematically extended to work habits, work evaluation, profit distribution, and the internal relationship between planners and executive personnel. Socialisation means the slow, decades-long transformation of the worker into an economic civil servant, of the employer into a responsible administrative official with extensive powers of authority, and of property into a kind of old-style hereditary fief to which a certain number of rights and privileges are attached. In socialism the economic will remains as free as that of the chess player; only the end effect follows a regulated course.[38]

The Hohenzollern created the Prussian civil-servant type, the first of its kind in the world. By reason of his inherited socialistic abilities this type vouches for the possibility of a new socialisation. For two hundred years he has symbolised in his methods what socialism symbolises to us today as a task to be done. If the German worker can give up Marxism and begin to think as a socialist, he will easily become the Prussian type just described. The “state of the future” is the state made up of civil servants. That is one of the inevitable final conditions toward which our civilisation is steadily moving. Even a billionaire’s socialism could imperceptibly

transform a nation into an army of private "officials." The big trusts have already virtually become private states exercising a protectorate over the official state. Prussian socialism, however, implies the incorporation of these professional-interest "states" into the state as a totality. The point at issue between conservatives and proletarians is in truth not at all the necessity of the authoritarian socialist system, which could be avoided by adopting the American system (that is the hope of the German liberals), but the question of supreme command. It may look as though two socialist alternatives exist today, one from above and another from below, and both of a dictatorial cast. Yet in reality either would gradually merge into the same final form.

At the moment people are unaware of this fact, so much so that both parties regard the Constitution as the decisive factor. But it is not a question of laws, it is a question of personalities. If the labour leaders are not able to demonstrate very soon the superior statesman-like skills required of them, others will take their place. In a political system that intentionally blurs the distinctions between workers and administrators, assuring each qualified individual, from menial labourer to foreman and corporation head, a secure career – in such a system a born statesman can see to it that the goals of conservatives and proletarians alike, the complete nationalisation of economic life by legislation rather than expropriation, are finally combined into one.

The leadership of such a system cannot be "republican." Putting aside all illusions, "republic" means today the corruptibility of executive power by means of private capital. A prince will obey the tradition of his house and the philosophy of his calling. No matter what our opinion of this may be, it removes him from the special political interest of parties as we have them now. He acts as their arbitrator. And if, in a socialistically structured state, membership in the professional councils including the State Council itself is determined in view of practical talents, the prince can narrow the selection by the use of ethical and moral criteria. A president, prime minister, or popular representative is the pawn of a party, and a party is in turn the pawn of those who pay for it. The prince is today a government's only protection against big business. The power of private capital is forcing a unification of socialist and monarchist principles. The individualistic ideal of private property

means subjugation of the state by free economic powers, i.e., democracy, i.e., corruptibility of the government by private wealth. In a modern democracy the leaders of the masses find themselves in opposition, not to the capitalists but to money and the anonymous power it exerts. The question is how many of these leaders can resist such power? If anyone would like to know the difference between an abstract theoretical democracy and one that has existed for some time and is therefore convinced of its own excellence, let him read Sallust on Catilina and Jugurtha. There can be no doubt that Roman conditions are in store for us, but a monarchist-socialist order can neutralise them.

These are the three ideals of property that are today locked in conflict: the communist ideal of equal distribution of the world's goods, the individualistic ideal of using them to create business trusts, and the socialistic ideal of administering them in the name of the totality.

-24-

Up to now I have refrained from mentioning Russia – intentionally, for with Russia it is not a question of different peoples but of different worlds.[39] The Russians are by no means a people like the Germans and the English. Like the Germanic tribes of the Carolingian age they contain within themselves the potentialities of many future peoples. "Russianism" is the promise of a future culture as the evening shadows grow longer and longer over the Western world. The distinctions between Russian and Western spirit cannot be drawn too sharply. As deep a cleavage as there is between the spirit, religion, politics, and economics of England, Germany, America, and France, when compared with Russia these nations suddenly appear as a unified world. It is easy to be deceived by some inhabitants of Russia who reflect strong Western influence. The true Russian is just as inwardly alien to us as a Roman in the Age of Kings or a Chinese long before Confucius would be if they were suddenly to appear among us. The Russians have been aware of this every time they have drawn a line of demarcation between "Mother Russia" and "Europe."

For us, the primitive soul of Russia is an inscrutable something that lies behind dirt, music, vodka, meekness, and a strange

melancholy. We naturally form our judgments subjectively, i.e., as the late, urban, and intellectually mature members of a wholly different culture. What we "see" in Russia is therefore not a soul just now awakening, which even Dostoyevsky was helpless to describe, but our own mental picture of it, which is formed by our superficial image of Russian life and Russian history and is further falsified by the use of such very "European" words as will, reason, and *Gemüt*.[40] Yet perhaps some of us are able to convey a virtually indescribable impression of that country that will leave no doubt as to the immense gap that separates us.

This childlike, inarticulate, fearsome people has been confused, wounded, tortured, and poisoned by having forced upon it the patterns of a foreign, imperious, masculine, and mature "European" culture. Its flesh has been pierced by European-style urban centres with European ambitions, and its undeveloped consciousness infected by overripe attitudes, philosophies, political ideas, and scientific principles. In 1700, Peter the Great forced upon his people the Baroque style of politics, complete with cabinet diplomacy, dynastic influence, administration, and a Western-style navy. In 1800, English ideas, basically incomprehensible to these people, made their entrance in the guise of French writers who succeeded in confusing the minds of a small intellectual minority. Even before 1900 the bookish Russian intelligentsia introduced Marxism to their country, a complex product of Western European dialectics of whose origin they were completely ignorant. Peter the Great transformed the tsarist state into a major power within the Western system, thus perverting its natural development. And the "intelligentsia," themselves the product of the Russian spirit after it was corrupted by foreign-style cities, then entered the scene with their sombre longing for indigenous institutions that must arise in some far-distant future, thereby distorting the primitive thought of their country into a kind of barren, childish theorising after the manner of professional French revolutionaries. Owing to the Russians' boundless humility and willingness to sacrifice, *Petrinism*[41] and bolshevism have accomplished some very real things in senseless and disastrous imitation of such Western creations as the Court of Versailles and the Paris Commune. But these institutions have affected only the surface of Russian existence; each of them can disappear and reappear with unpredictable swiftness. As yet Russia has had only religious experiences, no social or political

ones. Dostoyevsky, in reality a saint who has been made to appear in the nonsensical and ridiculous Western guise of a romancier, is misunderstood if his social "problems" are considered apart from his novelistic form. His true essence is sooner to be found between than in the lines, and in *The Brothers Karamazov* he reaches a religious intensity comparable only to that of Dante. His revolutionary politics, on the other hand, originated within an insignificantly small metropolitan coterie which no longer possessed definite Russian sensibilities and, as far as family extraction is concerned, can indeed hardly be called Russian at all. As a consequence Dostoyevsky's political thought was caught between the extremes of forced dogmatism and instinctive rejection.

Hence Russia's deep, formidable, atavistic hatred of the West, of the poison in its own body. It can be felt in the inner suffering of Dostoyevsky, in the violent outbursts of Tolstoy, and in the silent brooding of the common man. It is an irrepressible hatred, often unconscious and often concealed beneath a sincere inclination to love and understand, a basic hatred of all symbols of the Faustian will: the cities (Petersburg in particular) which intruded as vanguards of this will on the rural calm of the endless steppes; the arts and sciences, Western thought and emotion, the state, jurisprudence, administrative structure, money, industry, education, "society" – in fact, everything. It is the primeval apocalyptic hatred that distinguishes the culture of antiquity. All bolshevism contains something of the dismal bitterness of the Maccabees, as well as of the much later insurrection that led to the destruction of Jerusalem. Its rigid dogmatism alone could never have supplied the impetus that sustains the movement even to the present day. The subliminal anti-Western instincts of Russia, at first directed against *Petrinism*, have lent strength to bolshevism. But since bolshevism is itself an outgrowth of *Petrinism* it will in time be destroyed in order to complete Russia's liberation from "Europe."[42]

The proletarian of the West wishes to reshape Western civilisation to meet his special desires; the Russian intelligentsia wishes, by instinct if not always consciously, to destroy it. That is the meaning of Eastern nihilism. Our Western civilisation has long since become purely urban; in Russia there is no such thing as "the masses," but only "the people." Every true Russian, whether his occupation is that of scholar or civil official, is basically a peasant.

He is not really interested in the second-hand cities with their second-hand masses and mass ideologies. Despite Marxism, the only economic problems in that country are rural problems. The Russian "worker" is a misunderstanding. The only reality is the untouched, unharmed land, just as in Carolingian Europe. We went through this phase a thousand years ago, and thus we do not understand each other. We Western Europeans are no longer capable of living in communion with the virgin land. Whenever we go "to the country" we take with us the city with all its spiritual aspects; and we take it there in our blood, not just in our head like the Russian intelligent. The Russian mentally transports his village with him to the Russian cities.

If we wish to understand this irreparable cleavage between Eastern and Western 'socialism" we must at all times distinguish the Russian soul from the Russian political system, and the mentality of the leaders from the instincts of those they lead. For what else is Pan-Slavism but a Western-type political mask covering a strong sense of religious mission? Despite all the industrial catchwords like "surplus value" and "expropriation," the Russian worker is not an urban worker, not a man of the masses as in Manchester, Essen, and Pittsburgh. He is actually a ploughman and reaper who has left home, with a hatred for the foreign power that has spoiled the true calling that his soul still clings to. The ideological elements that make bolshevism work are quite insignificant. Even if its program were turned on its head, its unconscious mission for awakening Russia would remain the same: nihilism. Even so, bolshevism has an immense appeal for the fomenting intellectuals of our cities.

It has become a hobby for tired and addled brains, a weapon for decaying megalopolitan souls, an expression for rotting blood. The Spartacism of the salons belongs in the same category as theosophy and occultism; it is for us the same thing as the cult of Isis was, not for the Oriental slaves in Rome but for the decadent Romans themselves. The fact that it made its entrance in Berlin has to do with the monstrous sham of this Revolution. It is relatively unimportant that empty-headed fools started founding "peasant councils" in Berlin in imitation of the Soviet model, or that no one noticed that rural affairs are the cardinal problem in Russia while our headaches are strictly urban. In the face of socialism, Spartacism has no future in Germany. But bolshevism is certain to

conquer Paris, for when mingled with anarchic syndicalism it can satisfy the tired, sensation-hungry French soul. It will be the proper form of expression for the *taedium vitae* of that giant city that is so satiated with life. As a dangerous poison for refined Western intellects it has a greater future than in the East.

In Russia it will be replaced by some new form of tsarism, the only possible system for a people living under such conditions. Most probably this tsarism will resemble the Prussian socialistic system more closely than capitalist parliamentarism.[43] Yet the future of the unconscious forces of Russia lies not in the solution of political and social quandaries but in the imminent birth of a new religion,[44] the third to emerge from the matrix of Christianity, just as Germanic-Western culture unconsciously conceived the second form of Christianity around 100 A.D. Dostoyevsky is one of the prophets of this new faith; it is as yet nameless, but it has already begun to enter with quiet, infinitely tender power.

For us citizens of the Western world, religion is finished. In our urban souls what was once true religiosity has long since been intellectualized to 'problematics." The Church reached its fulfilment at the Council of Trent. Puritanism has turned into capitalism, and Pietism is now socialism. The Anglo-American sects represent merely the nervous Businessman's need for theological pastimes. There is no more repulsive spectacle than the attempt of certain Protestant groups to revivify the cadaver of religion by smearing it with bolshevist offal. The same thing has been tried with occultism and theosophy. And nothing is more deceptive than the hope that the future religion of Russia can stimulate a revival of religion in the West. There should no longer be any misunderstanding: with its hatred of state, science, and art, Russian nihilism is also directed against Rome and Wittenberg, whose spirit is present in all forms of Western culture and thus an integral part of what this nihilism aims to destroy.[45] Russia will push this development aside and link up once again, by way of Byzantium, directly with Jerusalem.

Bolshevism is a bloody caricature of Western problems that originated in Western religious sensibilities. By now it ought to have become clear how meaningless and superficial for this Russian movement the great universal problem is that now confronts the West: the choice between the Prussian and English ideas, between socialism and capitalism, state and parliament.

Let me summarise. It is my wish that this brief exposition will give those of our people who by reason of their initiative, self-discipline, and mental superiority are called upon to lead the next generation, a clear picture of the times in which we live and the direction in which we are destined to move.

We now know what is at stake: not just German destiny, but the destiny of all of civilisation. The critical question not only for Germany but for all of the world – but it must be answered for all of the world in Germany – is this: In the future, shall business rule the state, or the state rule business?

As far as this momentous question is concerned, Prussianism and socialism are one and the same. Up to now we have not realised this, and even today it is not yet clear. The teachings of Marx, together with class egoism, are guilty of causing both the socialist labour force and the conservative element to misunderstand each other, and thus also to misunderstand socialism.

But now it is unmistakable that they both have identical goals. Prussianism and socialism stand together in opposition to our "inner England," against a set of attitudes that has crippled and spiritually debilitated our entire people. The danger is very great. Woe to those who hold back at this hour because of selfishness or ignorance! They will ruin others and themselves. Solidarity will mean the fulfilment of the Hohenzollern idea and at the same time the redemption of labour. There is salvation either for conservatives and workers together, or for neither.

Labour must rid itself of its Marxist illusions. Marx is dead. As a form of existence socialism is just beginning; as a special movement within the German proletariat socialism is finished. For the worker there is either Prussian socialism or nothing.

The conservatives must rid themselves of the egoism that once, during the reign of the Great Elector, cost Captain von Kalckstein his head. No matter what one may think of democracy, it is the political form of this century that will survive. For the state there can only be democratisation or nothing. For the conservatives there can be only conscious socialisation or annihilation. But we must be freed of the English and French forms of democracy. We have our own.

The meaning of socialism is that life is dominated not by the contrast of rich and poor but by rank as determined by achievement and ability. That is our kind of freedom: freedom from the economic capriciousness of the individual.

My fervent hope is that no one will remain hidden who was born with the ability to command, and that no one is given the responsibility for commanding who lacks the inborn talent for doing so. Socialism means ability, not desire. Not the quality of intentions but the quality of accomplishments is decisive. I turn to our youth. I call upon all who have marrow in their bones and blood in their veins. Train yourselves! Become men! We need no more ideologists, no more chatter about *Bildung* and cosmopolitanism and Germany's intellectual mission. We need hardness, we need a courageous skepticism, we need a class of socialistic mastertypes. Once again: Socialism means power, power, and more power. Thoughts and schemes are nothing without power. The path to power has already been mapped: the valuable elements of German labour in union with the best representatives of the Old Prussian state idea, both groups determined to build a strictly socialist state to democratise our nation in the Prussian manner; both forged into a unit by the same sense of duty, by the awareness of a great obligation, by the will to obey in order to rule, to die in order to win, by the strength to make immense sacrifices in order to accomplish what we were born for, what we are, what could not be without us.

We are socialists. Let us hope that it will not have been in vain.

---

1 It is important in reading Spengler to realise that when he refers to the qualities of a "race," this is an enduring ethos of character that aggregates around a specific people-nation-state, but may also reside within those outside of this entity. Spengler did not refer to "race" in a Darwinian-biological sense, which is another aspect of the materialistic *Zeitgeist*, but in a spiritual sense in the manner of the German idealists such as Fichte and Herder. It is an irony of history that the English rather than the German idea of "race" predominated in Hitlerism; this became a cause of contention between Spengler and National Socialist ideologues such as Alfred Rosenberg. Hence, he refers to the "inner Englishman" among Germans, and the "Prussian" type that can be found among English and others. In this sense Marx, a Prussian-Jew, was imbued with the English spirit of materialism, and his attack on capitalism was a reflection, rather than transcendence, of it. The dichotomy Spengler was establishing describing German and Englishman was that of two world-outlooks contending for control of the 20th and 21st centuries. The 19th century materialist *Zeitgeist* won two World Wars for

supremacy, and continues to spread across the world under what is now called "globalisation," led by the USA after Britain was bled to exhaustion in the wars against Germany. The English-Puritan foundations of the USA, where profit is sanctified and wealth is regarded as a blessing from God ensured that the USA would assume the role of Britain. The founding of the USA as a revolt against tradition, where money replaced breeding, also enabled the entry of the Jews into the nerve centres of American society.

2 The USA, as the leader of English Liberalism, and of its religious manifestation, Puritanism, was founded on a sense of world-mission, of Puritan predestination. Today U.S. ideologues and strategists refer to the "American Century," and in Professor Francis Fukuyama's terms to the "end of history," to American Liberalism culturally, economically and politically being the final system to dominate the world, beyond which there will be no other. Marx had the same outlook in regard to Communism heralding the "end of history."

3 Spengler is stating that the English "Viking" money-piracy of Liberalism and the German ethos of State duty are two opposing outlooks of the same Faustian soul. The Faustian will-to-conquest would result in a clash of the two poles. Indeed, the First World War, during which Imperial Germany enacted "war socialism," can be seen as a prelude to the Second in the conflict between rival outlooks.

4 The World War (1939-1945) between German Socialism (albeit imperfectly expressed by Hitlerism in its ironically adhering to certain products of English Liberalism such as Social Darwinism) and English Liberalism, determined that "the coming empire" would be ruled by "billionaires," while the USA assumed the role of world-ruler from England.

5 Spengler's prescience is evident, predicting in the aftermath of the First World War, another world war between the capitalist and socialist systems, and the devastation of Europe that might see Russian occupation.

6 The thing-in-itself (das Ding *an sich*) as opposed to the phenomenon–the thing as it appears to an observer (from Kantian philosophy).

7 The position of England having been assumed by the USA after World War I, and definitively after World War II, the USA insists on English parliamentary democracy as the final world model – from the jungles of New Guinea and the Amazon to Japan and Syria –ultimately by force of military obliteration if the blandishments of development aid, loans and Hollywood/Fast Food /MTV do not work. Ultimately a United Nations world parliament is sought, called "the new world order" by President Bush in reference to the destruction of Iraq; one such dissident state. The U.S. method of waging wars of obliteration against opposing world-views is that of a religious fanaticism that points to the USA's founding Puritan, Old Testament ethos.

8 Here Spengler traces what is genuinely "Right" and what is Liberal-Whig back to the 17th century. Journalism and academia, in the English-speaking world in particular, have long confused the "Right" with its Whig-Liberal antithesis. Hence the widespread idiocy of calling Free Trade economics "Right-wing."

9 The fraud of parliamentary democracy, behind which stand plutocratic interests.

10 Having even long before Spengler's time been subverted by Liberalism, as Spengler states below.

11 The system suggests the organic or corporative State, whereby representation is based on the professions, not political party machines, and each functions as an essential organ of the social organism. Marx in *The Communist Manifesto was* particularly vehement against such "reactionist" ideas because the dialectic of class conflict would be transcended. The organic State became a feature of States and parties generically termed "Fascist," but also formed an important part of Catholic social doctrine in wanting to revive the guilds.

12 "Englishmen" in the sense of having an inner spirit that is foreign to the people-culture-state one was born into.

13 The seat of State Minsters at Dresden from 1736. The Baroque building was bombed during World War II.

14 "The thing in itself," not knowable through the sense or conceptualisation, in Kant's philosophy.

15 German bourgeoisie.

16 "What is permitted for Jove is not permitted for a bull."

17 Frockcoat.

18 In 1862 the German socialist Ferdinand Lassalle, in his book *Was nun?* ("What Now?: Second Lecture on the Constitution"), called for a union of labour and the Prussian monarchy to oppose liberalism and the English "nightwatchman" theory of the state that merely exists to keep civil order among competitors.

19 This paragraph cogently expresses what Spengler is proposing as "Prussian Socialism."

20 A "capitalist World Republic" continues to be an apt description of what is now commonly recognised as "globalisation." Tory and Whig are now indistinguishable in their commitment to Liberalism.

21 The *Caesarism* of Fascism and Nationalism Socialism, of what Spengler in the closing pages of *The Decline of The West* predicted as the "final conflict between Money and Blood" for world mastery, ended in the triumph of Money. In the closing pages of Spengler's final book, *The Hour of Decision*, he saw hope in Mussolini, and of the Fascist legions configuring as something new in Italy. He remained pessimistic about Hitler, however. The triumphal *Caesars* were, and remain, the billionaires and the bankers, with the generals serving the plutocrats.

22 While Marx wrote of the alienation of the former artisans and land-workers who were obliged by industrialisation to leave the land for the city, he regarded this as a positive dialectical step towards the proletarianisation of the masses. The dialectical stages toward Communism could not take place, according to Marx, until capitalism and industrialisation replaced the "idiocy of rural life." Ironically, the Communist revolutions prevailed in precisely those countries least industrialised: Russia and China. Marx and Engels wrote: "The bourgeoisie has subjected the country to the rule of the towns. It has created enormous cities, has greatly increased the urban population as compared with the rural, and has thus

rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life." (*Communist Manifesto*, "Bourgeois and Proletarians").

23 Marx was a man of his time, of the *Zeitgeist*, the age of materialism represented firstly by England. His answer to English materialism was therefore counter-materialism, but not a transcendence of its spirit.

24 The "unity of function" is the operation of an organic state.

25 Emmanuel Joseph Sieyes (١٧٤٨-١٨٣٦), a theorist of the French Revolution. His most famous pamphlet was "What is the Third Estate?"

26 "The Independents," Puritan religious dissidents, were a major factor in the English Revolution. This revolutionary millennialism was assumed as the doctrine of the USA, with its Puritan foundations, rather than the USSR, which had its own Russian messianic world-mission. (See: Bolton, "Was Bolshevism the Product of Traditional Russian Messianism?," Geopolitica.Ru, https://www.geopolitica.ru/en/article/was-bolshevism-product-traditional-russian-messianism

27 Marx was personally adverse to work, despite his bourgeois tastes, and relied on subsidies from Engels and unpaid debts to local shop-keepers, whom he held in contempt. (See: Bolton, *The Psychotic Left*, Black House Publishing, London, 2013, pp. 75-78).

28 Marx was personally adverse to work other than the scriptomania of his own political writings. He and his family lived in squalor, reliant on handouts from wealthy friends and relatives. He pawned his maid's shoes to pay for a daughter's piano lessons.

29 Marx, "On the Jewish Question" (1843).

30 Again, the Puritan ethos was based on the Old Testament. We might see in Marxism the convergence of Jewish and Puritan legacies.

31 Free Trade, of which Marx was a proponent as part of the dialectics of history.

32 Again, this points to Marx as a man of his time (*Zeitgeist*), not against it, or as the herald of a new age. Darwin, Malthus and the Free Trade economists, with Marx, were all part of the same *Zeitgeist*, based on "struggle" rather than the organic unity of function that Spengler calls "Prussian socialism."

33 American Puritan millennialism, derived from same *Zeitgeist*, likewise sees "the end of history" after the triumph of Liberalism over the entire world.

34 St. Paul's Church, Frankfurt, was the seat of the first liberal, elected parliament in 1848.

35 There was a great rivalry between two forms of socialism, outside the English, for the leadership of the world socialist movement: German and Russian, each with their particular race-feeling, with Marxism often playing a quite incidental role. During Marx's day the pan-Slavist Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin, was in bitter rivalry with Marx for control of the *Internationale*. Bakunin disparaged Marx as typically "Jewish." (See: Mikhail Agursky, *The Third Rome: National Bolshevism in the USSR*, London, 1987).

36 Today called "globalisation."

37 While the League of Nations was abortive this is precisely the system enacted after World War II with the creation of the United Nations Organisation, intended to be a world government, with the U.N. General Assembly acting as a world parliament, and with the USA and its plutocratic cabals exercising authority behind the democratic façade. The plan was rejected by Stalin who declined to play junior partner to his former U.S. allies against Fascism. (See: Bolton, "Origins of the Cold War: How Stalin Foiled a 'New World Order,'" *Foreign Policy Journal*, https://www.foreignpolicyjournal.com/2010/05/31/origins-of-the-cold-war-how-stalin-foild-a-new-world-order/

38 The Third Reich enacted such a regime, whereby the owner/employer became a "custodian" of his enterprise, and where the bulk of profits were either reinvested into the company, including the improvement of work conditions, or into state bonds. (See: Bolton, "The Myth of the Big Business-Nazi Axis," *Journal of Inconvenient History,"* https://www.inconvenienthistory.com/7/3/3434). The land of the peasantry became inviolable, and not subjected to foreclosure.

39 See also: Bolton, "Oswald Spengler and the Soul of Russia," *Geopolitica.Ru*, https://www.geopolitica.ru/en/1275-oswald-spengler-and-the-soul-of-russia.html; Spengler's essay below: "The Two Faces of Russia and Germany's Eastern Problems."

40 Feeling, heart, soul.

41 Petrinism: Western influences introduced to Russia, named after Peter the Great who sought to "Westernise" Russia.

42 "Bolshevism," or more specifically the *Petrinism* of Marxism that was imported into Russia, was even within Spengler's time being transformed into serving Russia's messianic world-mission in Marxist garb. The lamentation of Trotsky was that the revolution had been "betrayed" by Stalin, who reversed many of the early Marxist decrees. (See: Bolton, *Stalin: The Enduring Legacy*, Black House Publishing, 2012; also, Agursky, op. cit). For how Western capital funded the Marxists to secure Russia for exploitation, and how this was abruptly ended by Stalin, see: Dr Richard B. Spence, *Wall Street and the Russian Revolution 1905-1925*, Trine Day, 2017. Note: 1925 is the year Spence gives for Stalin's reversal of economic concessions to Western capital, the concessions process having been under the direction of Trotsky).

43 Spengler was again prescient. This is precisely what happened under Stalin, whom Trotsky condemned as the "Napoleon" of the Bolshevik revolution, and his state as "Bonapartism."

44 Stalin synthesised Bolshevism with a revival of the Orthodox Church. (See: Bolton, " 'Saint Joseph': Was Stalin a Defender of the Church?", *Inconvenient History*, https://www.inconvenienthistory.com/9/1/4214). Soviet workers and soldiers fought for "Mother Russia," not for the "international proletariat."

45 Nonetheless, like many in the "Conservative Revolutionary movement" of the Weimar era, including elements in the Hitler party, Spengler soon advocated an alliance between Germany and the USSR against the democratic plutocracies. Such widespread support in conservative circles for such an alliance was reflected in the Treaty of Rapallo (1922), the diplomatic masterpiece of German foreign

minister Walther Rathenau, with whom Spengler had been in contact since 1918, when he sent Rathenau a copy of the first volume of *The Decline of The West.*

The Two Faces of Russia and Germany's Eastern Problems

(1922)

An address delivered on February 14, 1922, at the Rhenish-Westphalian Business Convention in Essen; first published in *Spengler, Politische Schriften* (Munich, 1933). Spengler assesses the Russian character, sees Marxism as a foreign import that will not endure, and concludes by advocating an alliance between Germany and Russia in the face of common enemies. Although Western capitalism saw private wealth to be had in opening up Russia for the exploitation of her resources after the Revolution, and Trotsky served as their contact-man as commissar for foreign concessions, Spengler appealed to the patriotism of German businessmen in dealing with Russia for the interests of Germany above personal profit. Despite the "Bolshevism" of Russia many German conservatives and those of the Nationalist Right saw Russia as a potential ally, and Russian Bolshevism as Slavic authoritarianism, rather than doctrinaire Marxism. Spengler's speech was delivered two months before the Treaty of Rapallo between Russia and Germany, which enabled Germany to circumvent the military and economic strictures imposed under the Treaty of Versailles.

- § -

In the light of the desperate situation in which Germany finds itself today – defenceless, ruled from the West by the friends of its enemies, and the victim of undiminished warfare with economic and diplomatic means – the great problems of the East, political and economic, have risen to decisive importance. If from our vantage point we wish to gain an understanding of the extremely complex real situation, it will not suffice merely to familiarise ourselves with contemporary conditions in the broad expanses to the east of us, with Russian domestic policy and the economic, geographic, and military factors that make up present-day Soviet Russia. More

fundamental and imperative than this is an understanding of the world-historical fact of Russia itself, its situation and evolution over the centuries amid the great old cultures – China, India, Islam, and the West – the nature of its people, and its national soul. Political and economic life is, after all, Life itself; even in what may appear to be prosaic aspects of day-to-day affairs it is a form, expression, and part of the larger entity that is Life.

One can attempt to observe these matters with "Russian" eyes, as our communist and democratic writers and party politicians have done, i.e., from the standpoint of Western social ideologies. But that is not "Russian" at all, no matter how many citified minds in Russia may think it is. Or one can try to judge them from a Western-European viewpoint by considering the Russian people as one might consider any other "European" people. But that is just as erroneous. In reality, the true Russian is basically very foreign to us, as foreign as the Indian and the Chinese, whose souls we can likewise never fully comprehend. Justifiably, the Russians draw a distinction between "Mother Russia" and the "fatherlands" of the Western peoples. These are, in fact, two quite different and alien worlds. The Russian understands this alienation. Unless he is of mixed blood, he never overcomes a shy aversion to or a naïve admiration of the Germans, French, and English. The Tartar and the Turk are, in their ways of life, closer and more comprehensible to him. We are easily deceived by the geographic concept of "Europe," which actually originated only after maps were first printed in 1500. The real Europe ends at the Vistula. The activity of the Teutonic knights in the Baltic area was the colonisation of foreign territory, and the knights themselves never thought of it in any other way.

In order to reach an understanding of this foreign people we must review our own past. Russian history between 900 and 1900 A.D. does not correspond to the history of the West in the same centuries but, rather, to the period extending from the Age of Rome to Charlemagne and the Hohenstaufen emperors. Our heroic poetry, from Arminius to the lays of Hildebrand, Roland, and the Nibelungs, was recapitulated in the Russian heroic epics, the byliny, which began with the knights at the court of Prince Vladimir (d. 1015), the Campaign of Igor, and with Ilya Muromets, and have remained a vital and fruitful art form through the reigns of Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great, the Burning of Moscow, and to the

present day. Yet each of these worlds of primeval poetry expresses a very different kind of basic feeling. Russian life has a different meaning altogether. The endless plains created a softer form of humanity, humble and morose, inclined to lose itself mentally in the flat expanses of its homeland, lacking a genuine personal will, and prone to servility. These characteristics are the background for high-level politics in Russia, from Genghis Khan to Lenin.

Furthermore, the Russians are semi-nomads, even today. Not even the Soviet regimen will succeed in preventing the factory workers from drifting from one factory to another for no better reason than their inborn wanderlust. That is why the skilled technician is such a rarity in Russia. Similarly, the home of the peasant is not the village or the countryside into which he was born, but the great expanses. Even the mir or so-called agrarian commune – not an ancient idea, but the outgrowth of administrative techniques employed by the tsarist governments for the raising of taxes – was unable to bind the peasant, unlike his Germanic counterpart, to the soil. Many thousands of them flooded into the newly developed regions in the steppes of southern Russia, Turkestan, and the Caucasus, in order to satisfy their emotional search for the limits of the infinite. The result of this inner restlessness has been the extension of the Empire up to the natural borders, the seas and the high mountain ranges. In the sixteenth century Siberia was occupied and settled as far as Lake Baikal, in the seventeenth century up to the Pacific.

Even more deep-seated than this nomadic trait of the Russians is their dark and mystical longing for Byzantium and Jerusalem. It appears in the outer form of Orthodox Christianity and numerous religious sects, and thus has been a powerful force in the political sphere as well. But within this mystical tendency there slumbers the unborn new religion of an as yet immature people. There is nothing Western about this at all, for the Poles and Balkan Slavs are also “Asiatics.”

The economic life of this people has also assumed indigenous, totally non-European forms. The Stroganov family of merchants, which began conquering Siberia on its own under Ivan Grozny and placed some of its own regiments at the tsar’s disposal, had nothing at all in common with the great businessmen of the same century in the West. This huge country, with its nomadic population, might

have remained in the same condition for centuries, or might perhaps have become the object of Western colonial ambitions, had it not been for the appearance of a man of immense world-political significance, Peter the Great.

There is probably no other example in all of history of the radical change in the destiny of an entire people such as this man brought about. His will and determination lifted Russia from its Asiatic matrix and turned it into a Western-style nation within the Western world of nations. His goal was to lead Russia, until then landlocked, to the sea – at first, unsuccessfully, to the Sea of Asov, and then with permanent success to the Baltic. The fact that the shores of the Pacific had already been reached was, in his eyes, wholly unimportant; the Baltic coast was for him the bridge to "Europe." There he founded Petersburg, symbolically giving it a German name. In place of the old Russian market centres and princely residences like Kiev, Moscow, and Nizhni-Novgorod, he planted Western European cities in the Russian landscape. Administration, legislation, and the state itself now functioned on foreign models. The boyar families of Old Russian chieftains became feudal nobility, as in England and France. His aim was to create above the rural population a "society" that would be unified as to dress, customs, language, and thought. And soon an upper social stratum actually formed in the cities, having a thin Western veneer. It played at erudition like the Germans, and took on *esprit* and manners like the French. The entire corpus of Western Rationalism made its entry – scarcely understood, undigested, and with fateful consequences. Catherine II, a German, found it necessary to send writers such as Novikov and Radishchev into jail and exile because they wished to try out the ideas of the Enlightenment on the political and religious forms of Russia.

And economic life changed also. In addition to its ages-old river traffic, Russia now began to engage in ocean shipping to distant ports. The old merchant tradition of the Stroganovs, with their caravan trade to China, and of the fairs at Nizhni-Novgorod, now received an overlay of Western European "money thinking" in terms of banks and stock exchanges. Next to the old-style handicrafts and the primitive mining techniques in the Urals there appeared factories, machines, and eventually railroads and steamships.

Most important of all, Western-style politics entered the Russian

scene. It was supported by an army that no longer conformed to conditions of the wars against the Tartars, Turks, and Kirghiz; it had to be prepared to do battle against Western armies in Western territory, and by its very existence it continually misled the diplomats in Petersburg into thinking that the only political problems lay in the West. Despite all the weaknesses of an artificial product made of stubborn material, *Petrinism*[1] was a powerful force during the two hundred years of its duration. It will be possible to assess its true accomplishments only at some distant future time, when we can survey the rubble it will have left behind. It extended "Europe," theoretically at least, to the Urals, and made of it a cultural unity. An empire that stretched to the Bering Strait and the Hindu Kush had been Westernised to the extent that in 1900 there was hardly much difference between cities in Ireland and Portugal and those in Turkestan and the Caucasus. Travel was actually easier in Siberia than in some countries in Western Europe.

The Trans-Siberian Railway was the final triumph, the final symbol of the Petrinist will before the collapse. Yet this mighty exterior concealed an internal disaster. Petrinism was and remained an alien element among the Russian people. In reality there existed not one but two Russias, the apparent and the true, the official and the underground Russia.

The foreign element brought with it the poison that caused that immense organism to fall ill and die. The spirit of Western Rationalism of the eighteenth century and Western Materialism of the nineteenth, both remote and incomprehensible to genuine Russian thought, came to lead a grotesque and subversive existence among the intelligentsia in the cities. There arose a type of Russian intellectual who, like the Reformed Turk, the Reformed Chinese, and the Reformed Indian, was mentally and spiritually debased, impoverished, and ruined to the point of cynicism by Western Europe. It began with Voltaire, and continued from Proudhon and Marx to Spencer and Haeckel.[2]

In Tolstoy's day the upper class, irreligious and opposed to all native tradition, preened itself with blasé pretentiousness. Gradually the new world view seeped down to the bohemians in the cities, the students, demagogues, and literati, who in turn took it "to the people" to implant in them a hatred of the Western-style upper classes. The result was doctrinaire bolshevism. At first,

however, it was solely the foreign policy of Russia that made itself painfully felt in the West. The original nature of the Russian people was ignored, or at least not understood. It was nothing but a harmless ethnographic curiosity, occasionally imitated at *bals masques* and in operettas. Russia meant for us a Great Power in the Western sense, one which played the game of high politics with skill and at times with true mastery.

What we did not notice was that two tendencies, alien and inimical to each other, were operative in Russia. One of these was the ancient, instinctive, unclear, unconscious, and subliminal drive that is present in the soul of every Russian, no matter how thoroughly westernised his conscious life may be – a mystical yearning for the South, for Constantinople and Jerusalem, a genuine crusading spirit similar to the spirit our Gothic forebears had in their blood but which we hardly can appreciate today.

Superimposed on this instinctive drive was the official foreign policy of a Great Power: Petersburg versus Moscow. Behind it lay the desire to play a role on the world stage, to be recognised and treated as an equal in "Europe." Hence the hyper-refined manners and ways, the faultless good taste – things which had already begun to degenerate in Paris since Napoleon III. The finest tone of Western society was to be found in certain Petersburg circles. At the same time, this kind of Russian did not really love any of the Western peoples. He admired, envied, ridiculed, or despised them, but his attitude depended practically always on whether Russia stood to gain or lose by them. Hence the respect shown for Prussia during the Wars of Liberation (Russia would have liked to pocket Prussian territory) and for France prior to the World War (the Russians laughed at her senile cries for *revanche*). Yet, for the ambitious and intelligent upper classes, Russia was the future master of Europe, intellectually and politically. Even Napoleon, in his time, was aware of this. The Russian army was mobilised at the western border; it was of Western proportions and was unmistakably trained for battle on Western terrain against Western foes. Russia's defeat at the hands of Japan in 1905 can be partly explained by the lack of training for warfare under anything but Western conditions. Such policies were supported by a network of embassies in the great capitals of the West (which the Soviet government has replaced with Communist party centres for agitation).[3] Catherine the Great

took away Poland, and with it the final obstacle between East and West. The climax came with the symbolic journey of Alexander I, the "Saviour of Europe," to Paris. At the Congress of Vienna, Russia at times played a decisive role, as also in the Holy Alliance, which Metternich called into being as a bulwark against the Western revolution, and which Nicholas I put to work in 1849 restoring order in the Habsburg state in the interest of his own government.

By means of the successful tradition of Petersburg diplomacy, Russia became more and more involved in great decisions of Western European politics. It took part in all the intrigues and calculations that not only concerned areas remote from Russia, but were also quite incomprehensible to the Russian spirit. The army at the western border was made the strongest in the world, and for no urgent reason – Russia was the only country no one intended to invade after Napoleon's defeat, while Germany was threatened by France and Russia, Italy by France and Austria, and Austria by France and Russia. One sought alliance with Russia in order to tip the military balance in one's favour, thus spurring the ambitions of Russian society toward ever greater efforts in non-Russian interests. All of us grew up under the impression that Russia was a European power and that the land beyond the Volga was colonial territory. The centre of gravity of the Empire definitely lay to the west of Moscow, not in the Volga region, and the educated Russians thought the very same way. They regarded the defeat in the Far East in 1905 as an insignificant colonial adventure, whereas even the smallest setback at the western border was in their eyes a scandal, inasmuch as it occurred in full view of the Western nations. In the south and north of the Empire a fleet was constructed, quite superfluous for coastal defence: its sole purpose was to play a role in Western political machinations.

On the other hand, the Turkish Wars, waged with the aim of "liberating" the Christian Balkan peoples, touched the Russian soul more deeply. Russia as the heir to Turkey[4] – that was a mystical idea. There were no differences of opinion on this question. That was the Will of God. Only the Turkish Wars were truly popular wars in Russia. In 1807 Alexander I feared, not without reason, that he might be assassinated by an officers' conspiracy. The entire officers' corps preferred a war against the Turks to one against Napoleon. This led to Alexander's alliance with Napoleon at Tilsit, which

dominated world politics until 1812. It is characteristic how Dostoyevsky, in contrast to Tolstoy, became ecstatic over the Turkish War in 1877. He suddenly came alive, constantly wrote down his metaphysical visions, and preached the religious mission of Russia against Byzantium. But the final portion of Anna Karenina was denied publication by the Russian Messenger, for one did not dare to offer Tolstoy's skepticism to the public.

As I have mentioned, the educated, irreligious, Westernised Russians also shared the mystical longing for Jerusalem, the Kiev monk's notion of the mother country as the "Third Rome," which after Papal Rome and Luther's Wittenberg was to take the fulfilment of Christ's message to the Jerusalem of the apostles. This barely conscious national instinct of all Russians opposes any power that might erect political barricades on the path that leads to Jerusalem by way of Byzantium. In all other countries such political obstacles would simply disturb either national conceit (in the West) or national apathy (in the Far East); in Russia, the mystical soul of the people itself was pierced and profoundly agitated. Hence the brilliant successes of the Slavophil movement, which was not so much interested in winning over Poles and Czechs as in gaining a foothold among the Slavs in the Christian Balkan countries, the neighbours of Constantinople. Even at an earlier date, the Holy War against Napoleon and the Burning of Moscow had involved the emotions of the entire Russian people. This was not just because of the invasion and plundering of the Russian countryside, but because of Napoleon's obvious long-range plans. In 1809 he had taken over the Illyrian provinces (the present Yugoslavia) and thus became master of the Adriatic. This had decisively strengthened his influence on Turkey to the disadvantage of Russia, and his next step would be, in alliance with Turkey and Persia, to open up the path to India, either from Illyria or from Moscow itself. The Russians' hatred of Napoleon was later transferred to the Habsburg monarchy, when its designs on Turkish territory – in Metternich's time the Danubian principalities, and after 1878 Saloniki – endangered Russian moves toward the south.

Following the Crimean War they extended their hatred to include Great Britain, when that nation appeared to lay claim to Turkish lands by blockading the Straits and later by occupying Egypt and Cyprus. Finally, Germany too became the object of this hatred,

which goes very deep and cannot be allayed by practical considerations.[5] After 1878, Germany neglected its role as a Russian ally to became more and more the protector and preserver of the crumbling Habsburg state, and thereby also, despite Bismarck's warning, the supporter of Austro-Hungarian intentions in the Balkans. The German government showed no understanding of the suggestion made by Count Witte, the last of the Russian diplomats friendly to Germany, to choose between Austria and Russia. We could have had a reliable ally in Russia if we had been willing to loosen our ties to Austria. A total reorientation of German policy might have been possible as late as 1911.

Following the Congress of Berlin, hatred of Germany began to spread to all of Russian society, for Bismarck succeeded in restraining Russian diplomacy in the interest of world peace and maintaining the balance of power in "Europe." From the German point of view this was probably correct, and in any case it was a master stroke of Bismarckian statesmanship. But in the eyes of Petersburg it was a mistake, for it deprived the Russian soul of the hope of winning Turkey, and favoured England and Austria. And this Russian soul was one of the imponderables that defied diplomatic treatment. Hostility to Germany kept on growing and eventually entered all levels of Russian urban society. It was diverted momentarily when Japanese power, rising up suddenly and broadening the horizons of world politics, forced Russia to experience the Far East as a danger zone. But that was soon forgotten, especially since Germany was so grotesquely inept as to understand neither the immediate situation nor the future possibilities. In time, the senseless idea of the Berlin-Baghdad Railway came up; Germany now seemed intent on capturing full control of this path to Constantinople, a move which would have benefitted neither German politics nor the German economy.

Just as in the field of politics, the economic life of Russia was divided into two main tendencies – the one active and aggressive, the other passive. The passive element was represented by the Russian peasantry with its primitive agrarian economy; by the old-style merchants with their fairs, caravans, and Volga barges; by Russian craftsmen; and finally by the primitive mining enterprises in the Urals, which developed out of the ancient techniques of pre-Christian "blacksmith tribes," independent of Western mining

methods and experience.

The forging of iron was invented in Russia in the second millennium B.C. – the Greeks retained a vague recollection of the beginning of this art. This simple and traditional form of economy gradually found a powerful competitor in the civilised world of Western-style urban economy, with its banks, stock exchanges, factories, and railroads. Then it was money economy versus goods economy; each of these forms of economic existence abhors the other, each tries to attack and annihilate the other.[6]

The *Petrinist* state needed a money economy in order to pay for its Westernised politics, its army, and its administrative hierarchy, which was laced with primitive corruption. Incidentally, this form of corruption was habitual public practice in Russia; it is a necessary psychological concomitant of an economy based on the exchange of goods, and is fundamentally different from the clandestine corruption practiced by Western European parliamentarians. The state protected and supported economic thinking that was oriented toward Western capitalism, a type of thinking that Russia neither created nor really understood, but had imported and now had to manage. Furthermore, Russia had also to face its doctrinary opposite, the economic theory of communism. Communism was in fact inseparable from Western economic thinking. It was the Marxist capitalism of the lower class, preached by students and agitators as a vague gospel to the masses in the *Petrinist* cities.

Still, the decisive and truly agitating factor for Russia's future was not this literary, theoretical trend in the urban underground. It was, rather, the Russians' profound, instinctively religious abhorrence of all Western economic practices. They considered "money" and all the economic schemes derived from it, socialistic as well as capitalistic, as sinful and satanic. This was a genuine religious feeling, much like the Western emotion which, during the Gothic centuries, opposed the economic practices of the Arabic-Jewish world and led to the prohibition for Christians of money-lending for interest. In the West, such attitudes had for centuries been little more than a cliché for chapel and pulpit, but now it became an acute spiritual problem in Russia. It caused the suicide of numerous Russians who were seized by "terror of the surplus value," whose primitive thought and emotions could not imagine a

way of earning a living that would not entail the "exploitation" of "fellow human beings." This genuine Russian sentiment saw in the world of capitalism an enemy, a poison, the great sin that it ascribed to the *Petrinist* state despite the deep respect felt for "Little Father," the Tsar.

Such, then, are the deep and manifold roots of the Russian philosophy of intellectual nihilism, which began to grow at the time of the Crimean War and which produced as a final fruit the bolshevism that destroyed the *Petrinist* state in 1917, replacing it with something that would have been absolutely impossible in the West. Contained within this movement is the orthodox Slavophils' hatred of Petersburg and all it stood for[7], the peasants' hatred of the *mir*, the type of village commune that contradicted the rural concept of property passed down through countless family generations, as well as every Russian's hatred of capitalism, industrial economy, machines, railroads, and the state and army that offered protection to this cynical world against an eruption of Russian instincts. It was a primeval religious hatred of uncomprehended forces that were felt to be godless, that one could not change and thus wished to destroy, in order that life could go on in the old-fashioned way.

The peasants detested the intelligentsia and its agitating just as strongly as they detested what these people were agitating against. Yet in time the agitation brought a small clique of clever but by and large mediocre personalities to the forefront of power. Even Lenin's creation is Western, it is Petersburg – foreign, inimical, and despised by the majority of Russians. Some day, in some way or other, it will perish.[8] It is a rebellion against the West, but born of Western ideas. It seeks to preserve the economic forms of industrial labour and capitalist speculation as well as the authoritarian state, except that it has replaced the Tsarist regime and private capitalist enterprise with an oligarchy and state capitalism, calling itself communism out of deference to doctrine. It is a new victory for Petersburg over Moscow and, without any doubt, the final and enduring act of self-destruction committed by *Petrinism* from below. The actual victim is precisely the element that sought to liberate itself by means of the rebellion: the true Russian, the peasant and craftsman, the devout man of religion. Western revolutions such as the English and French seek to improve organically evolved

conditions by means of theory, and they never succeed. In Russia, however, a whole world was made to vanish without resistance. Only the artificial quality of Peter the Great's creation can explain the fact that a small group of revolutionaries, almost without exception dunces and cowards, has had such an effect. *Petrinism* was an illusion that suddenly burst. The bolshevism of the early years has thus had a double meaning. It has destroyed an artificial, foreign structure, leaving only itself as a remaining integral part. But beyond this, it has made the way clear for a new culture that will someday awaken between "Europe" and East Asia. It is more a beginning than an end. It is temporary, superficial, and foreign only insofar as it represents the self-destruction of *Petrinism*, the grotesque attempt systematically to overturn the social superstructure of the nation according to the theories of Karl Marx. At the base of this nation lies the Russian peasantry, which doubtless played a more important role in the success of the 1917 Revolution than the intellectual crowd is willing to admit. These are the devout peasants of Russia who, although they do not yet fully realise it, are the archenemies of bolshevism and are oppressed by it even worse than they were by the Mongols and the old tsars. For this very reason, despite the hardships of the present, the peasantry will someday become conscious of its own will, which points in a wholly different direction.

The peasantry is the true Russian people of the future. It will not allow itself to be perverted and suffocated, and without a doubt, no matter how slowly, it will replace, transform, control, or annihilate bolshevism in its present form. How that will happen, no one can tell at the moment. It depends, among other things, on the appearance of decisive personalities, who, like Genghis Khan, Ivan IV, Peter the Great, and Lenin, can seize Destiny by their iron hand. Here, too, Dostoyevsky stands against Tolstoy as a symbol of the future against the present. Dostoyevsky was denounced as a reactionary because in his *Possessed* he no longer even recognised the problems of nihilism. For him, such things were just another aspect of the *Petrinist* system. But Tolstoy, the man of good society, lived in this element; he represented it even in his rebellion, a protest in Western form against the West. Tolstoy, and not Marx, was the leader of bolshevism. Dostoyevsky is its future conqueror.

There can be no doubt: a new Russian people are in the process

of becoming. Shaken and threatened to their very soul by a frightful destiny, forced to an inner resistance, it will in time become firm and come to bloom. It is passionately religious in a way we Western Europeans have not been, indeed could not have been, for centuries. As soon as this religious drive is directed toward a goal, it possesses an immense expansive potential. Unlike us, such people do not count the victims who die for an idea, for it is a young, vigorous, and fertile people. The intense respect enjoyed over the past centuries by the "holy peasants" whom the regime often exiled to Siberia or liquidated in some other way – such figures as the priest John of Kronstadt, even Rasputin, but also Ivan and Peter the Great – will awaken a new type of leaders, leaders to new crusades and legendary conquests. The world round about, filled with religious yearning but no longer fertile in religious concerns, is torn and tired enough to allow it suddenly to take on a new character under the proper circumstances.

Perhaps bolshevism itself will change in this way under new leaders; but that is not very probable. For this ruling horde – it is a fraternity like the Mongols of the Golden Horde – always has its sights set on the West as did Peter the Great, who likewise made the land of his dreams the goal of his politics. But the silent, deeper Russia has already forgotten the West and has long since begun to look toward Near and East Asia. It is a people of the great inland expanses, not a maritime people. An interest in Western affairs is upheld only by the ruling group that organises and supports the Communist parties in the individual countries – without, as I see it, any chance of success. It is simply a consequence of Marxist theory, not an exercise in practical politics. The only way that Russia might again direct its attention to the West – with disastrous results for both sides – would be for other countries (Germany, for instance) to commit serious errors in foreign policy, which could conceivably result in a "crusade" of the Western powers against bolshevism – in the interest, of course, of Franco-British financial capital. Russia's secret desire is to move toward Jerusalem and Central Asia, and "the" enemy will always be the one who blocks those paths. The fact that England established the Baltic states and placed them under its influence, thereby causing Russia to lose the Baltic Sea, has not had a profound effect. Petersburg has already been given up for lost, an expendable relic of the *Petrinist* era. Moscow is once again the centre of the nation. But the destruction of Turkey, the

partition of that country into French and English spheres of influence, France's establishment of the Little Entente which closed off and threatened the area from Rumania southwards, French attempts to win control of the Danubian principalities and the Black Sea by aiding the reconstruction of the Hapsburg state – all these events have made England and, above all, France the heirs to Russian hatred. What the Russians see is the revivification of Napoleonic tendencies; the crossing of the Beresina was perhaps not, after all, the final symbolic event in that movement.

Byzantium is and remains the Sublime Gateway to future Russian policy, while, on the other side, Central Asia is no longer a conquered area but part of the sacred earth of the Russian people. In the face of this rapidly changing, growing Russia, German policy requires the tactical skill of a great statesman and expert in Eastern affairs, but as yet no such man has made his appearance.[9] It is clear that we are not the enemies of Russia; but whose friends are we to be – of the Russia of today, or of the Russia of tomorrow? Is it possible to be both, or does one exclude the other?

Might we not jeopardise such friendship by forming careless alliances? Similarly obscure and difficult are our economic connections, the actual ones and the potential ones. Politics and economics are two very different aspects of life, different in concept, methods, aims, and significance for the soul of a people. This is not realised in the age of practical materialism, but that does not make it any less fatefully true. Economics is subordinate to politics; it is without question the second and not the first factor in history. The economic life of Russia is only superficially dominated by state capitalism. At its base it is subject to attitudes that are virtually religious in nature. At any rate it is not at all the same thing as top-level Russian politics. Moreover, it is very difficult to predict its short and long-range trends, and even more difficult to control these trends from abroad.

The Russia of the last tsars gave the illusion of being an economic complex of Western stamp. Bolshevist Russia would like to give the same illusion; with its communist methods it would even like to become an example for the West. Yet in reality, when considered from the standpoint of Western economics, it is one huge colonial territory where the Russians of the farmlands and small towns work essentially as peasants and craftsmen. Industry

and the transportation of industrial products over the rail networks, as well as the process of wholesale distribution of such products, are and will always remain inwardly foreign to this people. The businessman, the factory head, the engineer and inventor are not "Russian" types. As a people, no matter how far individuals may go toward adapting to modern patterns of world economics, the true Russians will always let foreigners do the kind of work they reject because they are inwardly not suited to it. A close comparison with the Age of the Crusades will clarify what I have in mind. At that time, also, the young peoples of the North were non-urban, committed to an agrarian economy. Even the small cities, castle communities, and princely residences were essentially marketplaces for agricultural produce. The Jews and Arabs were a full thousand years "older," and functioned in their ghettos as experts in urban money economy. The Western European fulfils the same function in the Russia of today.

Machine industry is basically non-Russian in spirit, and the Russians will forever regard it as alien, sinful, and diabolical. They can bear with it and even respect it, as the Japanese do, as a means toward higher ends, for one casts out demons by the prince of demons. But they can never give their soul to it as did the Germanic nations, which created it with their dynamic sensibility as a symbol and method of their struggling existence. In Russia, industry will always remain essentially the concern of foreigners. But the Russians will be able to distinguish sensitively between what is to their own and what is to the foreigners' advantage. As far as "money" is concerned, for the Russians the cities are markets for agricultural commodities; for us they have been since the eighteenth century the centres for the dynamics of money. "Money thinking" will be impossible for the Russians for a long time to come. For this reason, as I have explained, Russia is regarded as a colony by foreign business interests.[10] Germany will be able to gain certain advantages from its proximity to the country, particularly in light of the fact that both powers have the same enemy, the financial interest-groups of the Allied nations. Yet the German economy can never exploit these opportunities without support from superior politics.[11] Without such support a chaotic seizure of opportunities will ensue, with dire consequences for the future. The economic policy of France has been for centuries, as a result of the sadistic character of the French people, myopic and purely

destructive. And a serious German policy in economic affairs simply does not exist.

Therefore it is the prime task of German business to help create order in German domestic affairs, in order to set the stage for a foreign policy that will understand and meet its obligations. Business has not yet grasped the immense economic significance of this domestic task. It is decidedly not a question, as common prejudice would have it, of making politics submit to the momentary interests of single groups, such as has already occurred by means of the worst kind of politics imaginable, party politics. It is not a question of advantages that might last for just a few years. Before the war it was the large agricultural interests, and since the war the large industrial interests, that attempted to focus national policy on the obtaining of temporary advantages, and the results were always nil. But the time for short-range tactics is over. The next decades will bring problems of world-historical dimensions, and that means that business must at all times be subordinate to national politics, not the other way around. Our business leaders must learn to think exclusively in political terms, not in terms of "economic politics." The basic requirement for great economic opportunity in the East is thus order in our politics at home.

---

1 The Westernisation efforts of Peter the Great.

2 Haeckel introduced Darwinism to Germany; a product of the English *Zeitgeist* of struggle that was translated into economic struggle and "Social Darwinism" by the Free Trade school, and to class struggle by Marx. As Spengler stated in *Prussianism and Socialism* the Darwinian struggle is alien to the German spirit and to true Western "socialism." However, it is also alien to the Russian spirit and the Russian "socialism" of brotherhood born from the endless expanses. For this Russian brotherhood, see: Nikolai Gogol, *Taras Bulba* (1835).

3 The communist parties under Russian auspices became tools of Russian foreign policy, and those that were suspect were shut down and often their leadership physically eliminated (the fate of the German Communist Party leadership which ironically fled to the USSR to escape Hitler).

4 Russia as the heir to Byzantium: Moscow as the "Third Rome," the centre of a world historical mission to redeem mankind, whether in the name of Christ or of Revolution, the messianic tendency is intrinsic to the Russian soul, as is the sense of martyrdom.

5 For the race-rivalry that existed between Russians and Germans for the leadership of "world socialism" see Agursky, op. cit.

6 The speculative money economy versus the goods economy remains one of the

great issues of our time, and one that was fought against Germany when the Third Reich opted for a "goods economy," including barter between states, which threatened the international trading system of speculative finance. The Soviet bloc also established a barter economy between states both within their sphere and abroad.

7 For *Slavophil* support for Bolshevism and *Slavophil* influences within Bolshevism, see Agursky, op. cit. Agursky shows that the Russian masses drew a vehement distinction between what they regarded as the Russian Bolshevism of Lenin and the alien Jewish Marxism of Trotsky.

8 The *Petrinism* of the Marxist intelligentsia was destroyed by Stalin. (See Bolton, *Stalin: The Enduring Legacy*, op. cit).

9 Putin has been attempting to follow this "Eurasian" destiny.

10 As stated above, Stalin ended the foreign concessions and set Russia on a new path away from exploitation by foreign capital. As Dr Spence shows in *Wall Street and the Russian Revolution*, op. cit., Russia was closed to foreign concessionaries in 1925.

11 Germany and Russia signed the Treaty of Rapallo precisely two months after Spengler's speech, in a common front against the Entente powers that were trying to exploit both.

Pessimism?

Preußische Jahrbücher, No. 184, 1921.

Even during Spengler's life, before Volume II of *The Decline of The West* had been published, Spengler was criticised for being "pessimistic," at a time when Germany was defeated, degraded and in bolshevist-democratic chaos. The assumption of "pessimism," of Spengler's view that the Western civilisation must die like any other organism, continues to be a cause of rejection from those of the "Right" who insist that so long as a race's "blood" remains "pure" such a "race" need not decay, and always has the chance to revive.[1] One might as well object that to realise one's own mortality is pessimistic, and give up at the earliest point of realisation, without regard as to what one's life might achieve or impart to the future. The life of the Sun and the Earth are themselves finite. In this essay Spengler addresses his early critics, and points out that recognition of the limited duration of a civilisation is not cause for "pessimism" but brings awareness of the remaining possibilities for a civilisation. Spengler's essays, speeches, and books were not funeral dirges nor prophesies for the "final days," but calls to action especially for youth, for Western civilisation to identify precisely what its options were for the fulfilment of its destiny. Interestingly, Spengler mentions that *The Decline of The West* could be better described as the "fulfilment of The West."

- § -

My book[2] has met with widespread misunderstandings. In a sense, that is almost an inevitable concomitant of any novel approach which arrives at new conclusions. Such a reaction is all the more to be expected when the conclusions reached, or even the perspectives and methodology that led to them, present a serious challenge to the prevailing mood of an age. When such a book chances to become fashionable, the misunderstandings will

multiply. For then people are confronted suddenly by a complex of ideas which they should actually not have attempted to digest until after years of preparatory reading. With my own book there is the added difficulty that only the negative side of the picture has hitherto reached the public. Most critics have neglected to observe that this first volume represents only a fragment from which, as I was soon to realise, it is not easy to form conclusions about what is to follow. The forthcoming second volume will round out the "Morphology of World History," thus bringing to a close my examination of at least one aspect of the problem. Attentive readers will have noticed that I touched briefly on a second aspect, the ethical question, in my essay *Prussianism and Socialism*.

One further obstacle to an understanding of my book is the rather disconcerting title it bears. I was careful to emphasise that this title was chosen years before publication, and that it objectively describes a simple fact for which evidence can be found in the most familiar events of world history. Still, there are people who cannot hear the word "decline" without thinking of a sudden and dreadful calamity. My title does *not* imply catastrophe. Perhaps we could eliminate the "pessimism" without altering the real sense of the title if we were to substitute for "decline" the word "fulfilment," bearing in mind the special functions that Goethe assigned to this concept in his own world view.

However, even the first instalment of my book was not addressed to speculative persons, but to active ones. My aim was to present an image of the world to be lived with, rather than to devise a system for professional philosophers to brood over. I was not aware of this distinction at the time, but it will obviously prevent a large number of readers from arriving at a true understanding of what the book is about.

The active person lives in the world of phenomena and with it. He does not require logical proofs, indeed he often cannot understand them. "Physiognomic rhythm" – one of the terms that practically no one has been able to comprehend fully – gives him deeper insights than any method based on logical proof ever could. I made assertions in my book which scholarly readers have regarded as completely contradictory. Yet all these are things that have long been felt and cherished privately, though not necessarily consciously, by individuals who are inclined to a life of action.

When such individuals read books, that is to say, when they enter the realm of theory, they reject the same "historical relativism" that is second nature to them when they are engaged in practical activity, or are observing people and situations for the purposes of action.

The contemplative person, on the other hand, is by nature remote from life. He views it from a distance, for it is strange and goes against the grain. As soon as it threatens to become something other than an observed object, he is annoyed. Contemplative persons collect, dissect, and arrange things, not for any practical purpose but simply because it makes them happy. They demand logical proofs and know how to go about getting them. To them, a book such as mine must forever remain an aberration. For I confess that I have never had anything but contempt for "philosophy for its own sake." To my way of thinking there is nothing more tedious than pure logic, scientific psychology, general ethics and aesthetics. Life is not made up of science and generalities. Every line that is not written in the service of active living seems to me superfluous. At the risk of being taken too literally, I would say that my way of looking at the world is related to the "systematic" way as the memoirs of a statesman are related to the ideal state of a utopian. The former writes down what he has lived through; the latter records what he has dreamed up.

Now there does exist, particularly in the German tradition, what might be called a statesmanlike way of experiencing the world, an unforced and unsystematic attitude toward life which can be recorded only by means of a kind of metaphysical memoir-writing. It is important to realise that my book belongs in this tradition. If in the following I mention some illustrious names, it is not meant to imply anything about the quality of the book but merely to indicate the type of vision that went into its making.

A powerful stream of German thought runs from Leibniz to Goethe and Hegel, and on into the future. Like all things German, this stream was forced to run underground and to flow on unnoticed through the centuries. For over the same period even the creators of this tradition found that they had to adapt themselves to foreign and superficial patterns of thought.

Leibniz was Goethe's great teacher, although the latter was never

really conscious of it. Goethe often adopted genuinely Leibnizian ideas, either out of a natural affinity for his thought or through the influence of his friend Herder. In such instances, however, he always referred to Spinoza, whose mode of thinking was in fact quite dissimilar. Leibniz's outstanding characteristic was his constant involvement in the important events of his time. If we were to remove from his works all the items that are concerned with politics, the reunification of the churches, mining projects, and the organisation of science and mathematics, not much would be left. Goethe resembles him in that he always thought historically, i.e., with constant reference to the real facts of existence. Like Leibniz, he would never have been capable of constructing an abstract philosophical system.

Hegel was the last great thinker to take political realities as his point of departure without letting his thought be entirely smothered by abstractions. Then came Nietzsche, a dilettante in the best sense, who held firmly aloof from academic philosophy, which by his time had become altogether sterile. He was taken in by Darwin's theories, yet he transcended the age of English Darwinism.[3] He gave us the vision with which we can now bring about a victory for a vital and practical approach to world history.

These are, as I now see, the premises that unconsciously influenced my writing. Among them there is not a single "system" of generalities. The historical compilations of Leibniz, Goethe's observations on nature, and Hegel's lectures on world history were all written in clear view of factual reality – something that cannot be said of Kant's and Schopenhauer's works. I construe the relationships between reality and speculative thought in a manner wholly different from the systematic philosophers. For them reality is lifeless matter from which laws can be derived. For me, reality presents examples that illuminate an experienced thought, a thought which is communicable only in this form. Because this approach is unscientific, it requires an uncommon facility for thinking in broad outlines and for synthesising. It normally happens, as I have had occasion to notice, that as the reader concentrates on one point in my book he quickly loses sight of the others. In doing so he misconstrues everything, for the book is so cohesive that to isolate a single detail is tantamount to committing an error. Moreover, one must be able to read between the lines.

Many things are merely hinted at, while others cannot be expressed at all in scientific fashion.

The central idea is the concept of Destiny. The reason it is so difficult to make the reader understand it is that the process of systematic, rational thought leads him to its very opposite: the idea of causality. Destiny and Chance are matters quite remote from the apprehension of cause and effect, antecedent and consequent. There is a danger that Destiny may be misunderstood as simply another way of referring to a causal sequence that exists without being readily visible. The scientific mind will never be able to grasp this. The ability to perceive facts of an emotional and vital nature ceases as soon as one begins to think analytically. Destiny is a word whose meaning is *felt*. Time, Yearning, and Life are closely related concepts. No one can presume to understand the essence of my thought unless he can sense the ultimate meaning of these words as I *intended it*.

The idea of Destiny leads to a kind of experience that is exceedingly difficult to comprehend. I call it “depth experience.” It is more closely related to rational thought, but only in its end effect, not in its origins. This concept presents us with two of the most difficult problems of all. What is meant by the word “Time”? There is no scientific answer to this question. What is meant by the word “Space”? Here, rational thought may possibly provide us with an answer. Yet a connection exists between Destiny and Time, and also between Space and Causality. What, then, is the relationship between Destiny and Cause? The answer to this is fundamental to the concept of depth experience, but it lies beyond all manners of scientific experience and communication. The fact of depth experience is as indisputable as it is inexplicable.

A third concept, likewise very difficult to grasp, is that of Physiognomic Rhythm. This is actually something which every human being possesses. He lives with it and constantly applies it to practical ends. It is something one is born with and which cannot be acquired. The proverbial naïveté and ludicrousness displayed in public affairs by the old-style abstract scholar is a result of the retarded development of this rhythm. Nevertheless, even this personality type possesses enough of it to go on living.

What I have in mind, however, is a very exalted form of this

Rhythm, an unconscious technique of grasping not merely the phenomena of everyday life but the sense of the universe. Few persons can be said to master it. It is the technique that makes a genuine historian the equal of a born statesman, despite the disparity between theory and practice. Of the two principal techniques of gaining knowledge and understanding, it is without doubt the more important by far for history and real life. The other method, systematic thought, serves only to discover truths. But facts are more important than truths. The entire course of political and economic history, indeed of all human endeavours, is dependent on the constant application of this technique by individuals, including the insignificant individuals who are historically passive as well as the great ones who make history.

The physiognomic technique is predominant during most of the waking life of historically active and passive individuals. By comparison, the systematic technique, which is the only one recognised by philosophy, is virtually reduced to historical insignificance. What makes my approach so unorthodox is the fact that it is consciously based on the technique of real life. As a result it is inwardly consistent, though it lacks a system.

The concept that has caused the most serious misunderstandings is the one to which I assigned, not quite fortunately perhaps, the term “relativism.” This has not the slightest thing in common with the relativism of physical science, which is based solely on the mathematical contrast between constant and function. It will take years for readers to become sufficiently familiar with my concept for it to gain real currency. For it is a completely *ethical* view of the world in which individual lives take their course. To those who have not understood the concept of Destiny, this term will be meaningless. As I see it, Relativism in history is an affirmation of the idea of Destiny. The uniqueness, irrevocability, and nonrecurrence of all events is the form in which Destiny manifests itself to the human eye.

Like the Physiognomic Technique, this Relativism has existed, either in active life or in passive observation, at all times. It is such a natural part of real life, and is in such complete control of everyday occurrences, that it does not reach the consciousness. In fact, when the mind is engaged in theorising, i.e., when it is forming generalisations, the existence of this Relativism is usually

denied emphatically. The idea is not really new as such. In our late age there can be no new ideas. Throughout the entire nineteenth century not one question was raised that had not already been discovered, reflected upon, and brilliantly formulated by the Scholastics. It is only because Relativism is such an intrinsic element of life, and thus so unphilosophical an idea, that it has not been considered suitable as part of a "system." The old adage, "One man's meat is another man's poison," is just about the reverse of all academic philosophy. The academic is bent on proving that one man's meat is *every* man's meat, i.e., that the ethical point he has just proved in his book is binding on all. I have quite consciously taken the opposite standpoint, namely that of life, not of thought. The two naïve positions maintain either that something exists that has normative value for all eternity regardless of Time and Destiny, or that such a thing does not exist.

However, what is here called Relativism is neither of these two positions. It is here that I have created something new. It is an experienced fact that "world history" is not a unified sequence of events, but rather a collection of high cultures, of which there have been eight in number up to now. The life histories of these cultures are quite independent of each other, yet each shares a similar structural pattern with all the others. This being established, I demonstrated that every observer, regardless of whether he thinks in terms of life or of thought only, thinks solely as a representative of his own particular time. With this we can dismiss one of the most absurd criticisms levelled against my views: the argument that Relativism carries with it its own refutation. The conclusion to be drawn is that for every culture, for every epoch within a culture, and for every kind of individual within an epoch there exists an overall perspective that is imposed and exacted by the time in question. This perspective must be considered absolute for that particular time, but *not* with respect to other times.[4] There is a perspective imposed by our own time, yet it goes without saying that it is different from that of the Age of Goethe. "True" and "false" are concepts that cannot be applied here. The only pertinent descriptive terms are "deep" and "shallow." Whoever thinks differently is, in any case, incapable of thinking historically.

Any vital approach to the problems of history, including the one I am proposing, belongs to a single time. It evolved out of a

previous approach and will in turn evolve into another. There are in all of history just as few totally correct or totally false approaches as there are right and wrong stages in the growth of a plant. All are necessary, and the only sensible thing to say is that a certain stage is successful or unsuccessful with respect to the demands of the moment. The same holds true for every world view, no matter when it arises. Even the most hard-bitten systematic philosopher feels this. He uses such terms as “obsolete,” “typical for the age,” and “premature” to describe the views of others. By so doing he is admitting that the concepts of truth and falsity have meaning only for the outer shell of science, but not for its vital essence.

Thus we arrive at the distinction between *facts* and *truths*. A fact is something unique, something which has really existed or will really exist. A truth is something which can exist as a possibility without ever entering reality. Destiny has to do with facts; the relation between cause and effect is a truth. All this has been known since time immemorial. What men have failed to realise, however, is that life, for that very reason, has to do only with facts, that it is made up of facts exclusively, and that its only mode of response is factual. Truths are quantities of thought, and their importance lies solely within the realm of thought. Truths can be found in a doctoral dissertation in philosophy; flunking a doctoral examination is a fact. Reality begins where the realm of thought ends. No one, not even the most ascetic systematician, can overlook this fact of life. And, indeed, he does not overlook it. But he forgets it as soon as he starts thinking about life instead of living it.

If I can lay claim to any accomplishment at all, it is that no one can ever again view the future as an unwritten tablet on which anybody can inscribe whatever pleases his fancy. The capricious and arbitrary outlook that endorses the motto “It shall be thus!” must now give way to a cool and clear vision that sees the possible, and therefore necessary, facts of the future, and that makes its options accordingly.[5] The first thing that confronts man in the form of Destiny is the time and place of his birth. This is an inescapable fact; no amount of thought can comprehend its origin, and no will can avert it. Moreover, it is the most decisive fact of all. Everyone is born into a people, a religion, a class, an age, a culture.[6] It is Destiny that determines whether a man be born a slave in Periclean Athens, a knight at the time of the Crusades, or a labourer’s or rich

man's son in our own day. If anything can be called fate, fortune, or destiny, it is this. History means that life is constantly changing. For the individual, however, life is precisely thus and so, and not otherwise. With his birth the individual receives his nature and a particular range of possible tasks, within which he has the privilege of free choice. Whatever his nature wills or is capable of, whatever his birth allows or prevents, for every individual there is prescribed a definite range of happiness or misery, greatness or cowardice, tragedy or absurdity, which will make up *his life only*. What is more, Destiny determines whether his life is to have significance for the lives of those around him, that is to say, whether it will be meaningful for history. In the light of this, the most fundamental of facts, all philosophising about "the" task of "humanity" and "the" nature of "morality" is idle talk.

That is what is truly novel in my approach, an idea that had to be expressed and made accessible to life after the entire nineteenth century had striven toward it: Faustian man's *conscious* relation to history. People have not understood why I chose to substitute a new image for the usual pattern (antiquity – Middle Ages – modern times). Man lives constantly "in an image"; it governs his decisions, and shapes his mentality. He can never rid himself of an old image until he has acquired a new one and has made it completely his own.

"Historical vision" – this is possible only for Western European man, and even for him it is possible only from this moment on. Nietzsche could still speak of the historical *disease*. He used this term to describe what he saw around him: the faint-hearted romanticism of the poets and writers, the philologians' dreamlike nostalgia for the distant past, the patriots' habit of timidly consulting previous history before arriving at any decisions, the urge to compare, symptomatic of insufficient mental independence.

Since 1870 we Germans have suffered more from this disease than any other nation. Is it not true that we have continually looked to the ancient Teutons, to the Crusader knights, and Hölderlin's Greeks whenever we have been at a loss for what to do in the Age of Electricity? The British have been more fortunate. They have preserved all the institutions that sprang up in the wake of the Norman Conquest: their laws, freedoms, and customs. At all times they have been able to sustain an impressive tradition without ever

seeing it in jeopardy. They have never felt the need to compensate for a thousand years of shattered ideals by gazing nostalgically into the remote past. The historical disease lingers on in the idealism and humanism of today's Germany. It is causing us to concoct pretentious plans for improving the world; each day brings some radically new and foolproof scheme for giving all aspects of life their final, correct form. The only practical outcome of all these designs lies in the fact that they are exhausting crucial energies through senseless quarrelling, spoiling our chances to discover real opportunities, and failing to give London and Paris any real competition.

Historical vision is the direct opposite of this. Those who have it are experts – confident, cool-headed experts. A thousand years of historical thought and research have spread out before us a vast treasure, not of knowledge, for that is relatively unimportant, but of experience. Once these experiences are viewed in the perspective I have just described, they take on an entirely new meaning. Up to now – this is truer for the Germans than for any other nation – we have looked to the past for models to live by. But there are *no* models. There are only examples of how the life of individuals, peoples, and cultures have evolved, reached maturity, and become extinct. These examples show us the relationships that exist between inborn character and external conditions, between Tempo and Duration. We are not given patterns to imitate. Rather, we can observe how something happened, and thus learn what consequences to expect from our own situation.

Up to now only a few persons have had such insights, and then only with regard to their immediate pupils, subordinates, or co-workers. Some superior statesmen have had it as well, but only in connection with personalities and nations of their own time. This was the refined art of controlling life's forces, acquired through the ability to seize its opportunities and predict its changes. With this art one could be master over others or even be Destiny itself. We are now in a position to do likewise for our own culture, predicting its course for centuries ahead as if it were an organism whose inner structure we had studied exhaustively. We realize that every fact is a chance occurrence, unforeseen and unpredictable. Yet with the picture of other cultures before us, we can be just as sure that the nature and course of future life, of individuals as well as of cultures,

are *not* accidental. Future developments can, of course, be brought to perfection, threatened, corrupted, and destroyed by the free choice of active persons. But they can never be diverted from their real direction and meaning.

This has made possible for the first time a truly great form of education. It will require the recognition of inner potentialities. It will mean imposing obligations, not on the basis of "ideal" abstractions, but in agreement with the prediction of future facts. It will necessitate the training of individuals and whole generations for the fulfilment of these obligations. For the first time we are able to see that the entire literature of ideal "truths," all of those noble, well-meant, and foolhardy schemes, outlines, and brainstorms, all of those books, pamphlets, and speeches are absolutely useless. All other cultures have, at a corresponding stage in their development, labelled these things for what they are and consigned them to oblivion. Their only tangible effect was to have puny scholars write books about them later. Let me repeat: For the mere observer there may be such things as truths; for life there are no truths, only facts.

This leads me to the question of pessimism. When in 1911, after the events at Agadir, I suddenly discovered my "philosophy"
the European-American world, was infused with the trivial optimism of the Darwinist age. With the title of my book, chosen in instinctive opposition to the prevailing mood, I unconsciously put my finger on the aspect of evolution that no one was willing to see. If I had to choose again now, I would try with another formula to strike at today's equally trivial pessimism. I would be the last person to maintain that history can be appraised by means of a catchword.

Be that as it may, as far as the "goal of humanity" is concerned I am a convinced and thoroughgoing pessimist. As I see it, humanity is a zoological entity. I see no progress, no goal or path for mankind, except perhaps in the minds of Western progress-mongers. In this mere mass of population I can distinguish no such thing as a "spirit," not to speak of a unity of effort, feeling, or understanding. The only place where I can make out a meaningful advance of life toward a particular goal, a unity of soul, will, and experience, is in the history of single cultures. What we discover there is, to be sure, limited and factual. Yet it shows us a progression from desire to accomplishment, culminating in new tasks that do not take the form

of ethical catchwords and generalities but, rather, of tangible historical goals.

Whoever chooses to call this pessimism will reveal thereby his utterly pedestrian idealism. This kind of person sees history as a highway, with mankind plodding along steadily in one direction, forever following some philosophical cliché or other.[7] The philosophers, each in his own way but nonetheless "correctly" in every case, have long since hit upon the sublime and abstract terminology to describe the true goal and essence of our earthly sojourn. Yet optimism consists further in forever striving after these slogans without ever reaching them. A conceivable end to all this striving would spoil the ideal. Whosoever objects to all this is a pessimist.

I would be ashamed to go through life with such tawdry ideals. There is in all of this the diffidence of born dreamers and cowards, people who cannot stand to face reality and formulate a real goal in a few sensible words. They insist on broad generalities that glitter in the distance. This calms the fears of those who are impotent when it comes to anything demanding leadership, enterprise, or initiative. I am aware that a book such as mine can have devastating consequences for these people. Germans have written to me from America that for persons who are determined to *be* something in life, the book has the effect of a bracing tonic. Still, those born only for dreaming, poetry, and oratory can be contaminated by any book. I know these "fair youths"; the universities and literary coteries are fairly crawling with them. First it was Schopenhauer, and then Nietzsche, who freed them from the obligation to expend energy. Now they have found a new liberator.

No, I am not a pessimist. Pessimism means not to see any more tasks. I see so many unsolved tasks that I fear we shall have neither time nor men enough to go at them. The practical aspects of physics and chemistry have come nowhere near the limits of their possibilities. Technology has yet to reach its peak in nearly all fields. One of the major tasks still facing modern classical philology is to create an image of antiquity that will remove from the minds of our educated populace the "classical" picture, with its invitation to pedestrian idealism.

There is no better place than Classical antiquity to learn how

matters really stand in the world, and how romanticism and abstract ideals have been shattered time and again by factual events.[8] Things would be quite different for us if we had spent more time in school on Thucydides and less on Homer. Up to now no statesman has ever thought to write a commentary on Thucydides, Polybius, or Tacitus for our young people. We have neither an economic history of antiquity nor a history of ancient politics. Despite the astonishing parallels to Western European history no one has ever written a political history of China to the reign of Shih Huang Ti. The Law, imposed by the social and economic structure of our civilisation, is still in the initial stages of being investigated. According to those most familiar with the field, the science of jurisprudence has yet to reach out beyond philology and dry scholasticism. Political economics is as yet not really a science at all.

I shall refrain from discussing the political, economic, and organisational tasks we face in our own future. What our contemplatives and idealists are seeking is a comfortable *Weltanschauung*, a philosophical system that requires only that one be convinced by it; they want a moral excuse for their timorousness. These are the born debaters who spend their days in the remote corners of life discussing things. Let them stay there.

We cannot fashion a program for the future millennia of humanity without running the risk of its being thwarted immediately by reality. It is possible, however, to do something of the sort for the next few centuries of Faustian culture, the historical outlines of which are visible. What are the implications of these facts? The Puritan pride of England says, “Everything is predestined. Therefore I must emerge victorious.” The others say, “Everything is predestined. That is prosaic and not at all idealistic. Hence there is no use even trying.” But the truth is that the tasks facing the factual persons among us Westerners are innumerable. For the romantics and ideologists, however, who cannot think of the world without writing poems, painting pictures, devising ethical systems, or living solemn *Weltanschauungen*, it is quite understandably a hopeless prospect.

I shall come right out and say it – let those who wish cry out in protest: The historical significance of art and abstract thought is seriously overrated. No matter how important their role has been

during great eras, there have always been more essential things. In the history of art the importance of Grünewald and Mozart cannot be overestimated. In the *real* history of the ages of Charles V and Louis XV their existence is of no consequence at all. It may happen that a great historical event stimulates an artist. The reverse has never occurred. What is being produced by way of art today does not even bear significance for art history. And as far as today's academic philosophy is concerned, none of its various "schools" has the slightest pertinence for life or the soul. Neither our educated citizenry nor scholars in the other disciplines are really paying attention to them. All they are good for is to have dissertations written about them, which will be quoted in later dissertations, none of which will ever be read except by future philosophy professors.

It was Nietzsche who questioned the validity of science. It is high time that we asked the same questions about art. Eras without genuine art and philosophy can still be great eras; the Romans have demonstrated this for us. Yet for those who are always a step behind the times, the arts are synonymous with Life itself.[9]

Not for us, however. People have told me that without art life is not worth living. I ask in return: *For whom* is it not worth living? I should not care to have lived as a sculptor, ethical philosopher, or dramatist in the days of Marius and Caesar. Nor would I care to have been a member of some Stefan George Circle, attacking Roman politics from behind the Forum with the grand pose of the *littérateur*. No one can have a closer affinity for the great art of our past – for there is none today – than I. I should not care to live without Goethe, Shakespeare, or the great monuments of older architecture. I am thrilled by any sublime Renaissance masterpiece, precisely because I am aware of its limitations. I love Bach and Mozart more than I can say; but this cannot make me speak of all the thousands of writers, painters, and philosophers that populate our cities as true artists and thinkers. There is more painting, writing, and "outlining" going on in Germany today than in all the other countries put together. Is this culture? Or is it a deficiency of our sense of reality? Are we so rich in creative talent, or are we lacking in practical energy? And do the results justify in any way at all the noisy self-advertisement?

Expressionism, yesterday's vogue, produced not a single

personality or artistic work of any note. As soon as I began to question the sincerity of that movement I was shouted down by a thousand voices. Painters, musicians, and poets tried to prove me wrong, but with words, not with deeds. I shall stand corrected when they come forth with the equivalent of *Tristan*, the *Hammerklavier Sonata*, *King Lear*, or the paintings of Marées.

It is a great mistake to consider these flaccid, effeminate, superfluous "movements" as *the* necessary phenomena of our age. I call this the artsy-craftsy approach. Architecture, painting, poetry, religion, politics, even philosophy itself are treated as handicrafts, techniques that can be taught and learned within the four walls of the studio. This is the argument that emanates from all of our "circles" and brotherhoods, cafés and lecture halls, exhibits, journals, and publishing houses – and it reeks to high heaven. It not only wants to be tolerated, it wants full sway. It calls itself German. It purports to claim the future.

Even in this area I see tasks ahead for us, yet I look in vain for the men (*men!*) to perform them. One of the tasks for our century is the German novel. Up to now we have had only Goethe. The art of the novel requires outstanding personalities, superior in vigour and breadth of vision, reared in cultural excellence, high-minded but tactful in their views. As yet there is no German prose to match the English and the French. What we have is the individual style of single writers, isolated examples of personal mastery against a background of very poor average performance. The novel could bring about this improvement. Nowadays, however, practical men such as industrialists and army officers are using better, sounder, clearer, more profound language than the tenth-rate scribblers who think style is a sport.

Here in the land of Till Eulenspiegel we have yet to produce a comedy in the grand manner, sublime and profound, clever, tragic, light and refined. It is now almost the only remaining form in which a writer can be poet and philosopher at once, and without pretence. Like Nietzsche a while ago, I still feel the need for a German *Carmen*, full of spice and wit, sparkling with melody and rhythm, a work to stand in the proud tradition of Mozart, Johann Strauss, Bruckner, and the young Schumann. But the orchestral acrobats of today are incompetents. Since Wagner's death not one great creator of melody has appeared on the scene.

There was a time when art was a vital enterprise, when life's rhythm took hold of artists, their works, and their public to such an extent that profundity of thought, rather than formal exactitude, was the true criterion of artistic greatness. Instead of this vital rhythm, we have today what is called the "creative outline" - the most despicable thing imaginable. Everything that lacks life is getting "outlined." They are "outlining" a private culture with theosophy and the leader-cult; they are "outlining" a private religion with editions of Buddha on hand-made paper; they are "outlining" a State in the spirit of Eros. Since the Revolution there have been "outlines" for agriculture, commerce, and industry.

These ideals should be dashed to pieces; the louder the noise, the better. Hardness, Roman hardness is taking over now. Soon there will be no room for anything else. Art, yes; but in concrete and steel. Literature, yes; but by men with iron nerves and uncompromising depth of vision. Religion, yes; but take up your hymnbook, not your classy edition of Confucius, and go to church. Politics, yes; but in the hands of statesmen and not idealists. Nothing else will be of consequence. And we must never lose sight of what lies behind and ahead of us citizens of this century. We Germans will never again produce a Goethe, but indeed a Caesar.[10]

---

1 I have addressed these questions in *The Decline and Fall of Civilisations*, Black House Publishing, 2018.

2 *The Decline of The West*, Vol. I.

3 Because of Nietzsche's philosophy of will-to-power as struggle, an overcoming of obstacles as the basis of "evolution," he is often confounded with Darwinism. Rather, Nietzsche wrote to confound Darwin with a contrary idea of "evolution" that was self-willed rather than biologically determined. He saw Darwinism as a degrading of man to an animalistic existent for survival rather than an upward urge towards infinity. In that sense this is also the "Faustian" imperative that Spengler used to describe the character of the Western soul. The two great influences on Spengler were Nietzsche and Goethe. (See: Bolton, "Nietzsche Contra Darwin: An Examination of the Nietzschean-Darwinian Pseudosynthesis," in Southgate, *Nietzsche: Thoughts & Perspectives* Vol. III, Black Front Press, London, 2011. Also: Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, New York, 1968).

4 Spengler's philosophy is a refutation of the notion of history as a darwinian–type evolution from "primitive to modern" "mankind;" a "march of humanity" upward. There is no such uniform "march," no such reality as "progress" and no such entity as "mankind." What Spengler shows is an unfolding of cultures with their own life-cycles. The perspective of Spengler's time among scientists,

politicians, and academics was that the 19th century had reached the epitome of "human" "progress," where the blessings of a "world civilisation," at the time heralded by Britain, the home of the Industrial Revolution, would be bestowed on every corner of the Earth. The same outlook persists, with spokesmen of our time such as Dr Francis Fukuyama using phrases like "the end of history" in "proving" that the Late West's Liberalism is the ultimate destiny of "mankind" after which there is nothing more required.

5 However, Spengler as the herald of a new world-view for the Western Civilisation, was defeated and remains on the periphery. His historical-philosophy remains a heresy against what is "modern" and what is "progressive." Even the "Right" has largely remained in the quagmire of 19th century materialism, and therefore rejects or at best under-rates Spengler.

6 Here is a key to Spengler's historical-philosophy.

7 This lineal path of imagined ascent for "humanity" continues to be the dominant outlook of scientists, politicians and philosophers in "The West."

8 It seems symptomatic of political unreality how Classical civilisation was imagined by Masons, Illuminati, Jacobins, Deists, and other "progressives," whose perceptions of the Classical polity became models for the American and French Republics; as unreal as "Enlightenment" assumptions about the "Noble Savage."

9 Spengler was by no means indifferent to art and aesthetic appreciation. However, in the Late or "Winter" epoch of a Civilisation such as the West has long entered, aesthetics become static and starts to degenerate in efforts to establish "new" schools such as Abstract Expressionism, Dada, and Surrealism, and even the atonal in music. The last course to greatness left for such a Civilisation is technical-military rather than aesthetic. Spengler devotes the last pages of *The Decline of The* West to this question. One might add that Hitler's Germany, as an attempt to reverse the degeneration of the arts, did not embark on the new, and formulate a "Nazi art," but sought to revive past eras, such as the Gothic, Renaissance, and the monumental sculptures (Arno Breker) and architecture of Classical Rome (Speer). Of Third Reich music, for example, Carl Orff's great "Carmina Burana" was inspired by a Medieval monastic poem. Spengler now proceeds to explain his views on the new art movements in Germany in his time, which continue to apply to the entirety of the Late West with increasing depravity.

10 The Late or "Winter" epoch of a Civilisation ends with a conflict for supremacy between "Money and Blood," and "Caesars" arise to vanquish plutocracy which stands behind the façade of democracy. In this context, Spengler, in his final work, *The Hour of Decision* (1934) saw possibilities in Fascist Italy. The ensuing great conflict between "Money and Blood," three years after Spengler's death, however, saw "Money" triumphant, in temporary alliance with Russia. What the Late West got was not a "Caesar," but U.S. Presidents. What Germany got was Angela Merkel. The life-cycle of a civilisation can be prematurely aborted like any other living organism.

The German National Character

(1927)

Spengler questions the maturity of the German character, and its not yet having had its characteristics integrated as a totality from the various peoples that have contributed to its history, to form a *People* that fulfils an historical destiny. However, because Germans were still in the process of forming into a *People*, with a common national character, they had the potential of youth, and had not reached the senility of a *People* that was historically passé, as the British, for example, would soon become. What Germany needed was a leader, a "Fuehrer," albeit the one that arose several years prior to Spengler's death was not regarded by him as suitable for the purpose.

- § -

The character of a people is the result of its destinies. It is not the land, the climate, the sky and the sea, nor the race, the blood, that finally bring it forth. This is only the stuff out of which the winds of historical reality make a shape. A people is least able to do what it has been taught to do by talking, writing and reading: that is to say, by its education.

From history it is more the sufferings than the successes which form the character. The Roman is not a consequence of victories in the great period since the Battle of Sentinum, which rather presuppose it, but the plight of lost centuries before, when the people always lived on the verge of annihilation.

The white peoples of the present, even the oldest, are not older than a millennium. They originated from Charlemagne, when Germanic tribes of their own and the folly of the past created a handful of new peoples. What has happened to them since then is to be read today in their character, with their strong and weak, great or ridiculous, deep or flat features, whether they feel at home or alien in the world, chasing or suffering for their happiness, but even

the deep cheerfulness of many parts of the country, and even the laughter of the folk festivals and taverns, still speak of streams of blood and tears, innumerable battles, heart-breaking disappointments, whole generations sacrificed, and nonetheless repeatedly in vain. The “world history,” which gave these peoples their character, as heroes or fools is one big tragedy, and it will stay that way for as long as it lasts. Most of us are too educated to believe in it.

There are peoples whose character is as simple as a shotgun barrel; and others who do not even understand themselves let alone for someone else to understand them. An Englishman does not puzzle anyone. English history goes its straight way, very bloody, but without kink, without wavering, without surprises. The Englishman has no problems. They are all an open book. All the more puzzling are the Germans. They have always spent their time thinking about each other, about themselves and about others. It has been asserted that the German people have no character whatsoever. That may be true. It does not have one, but many, as many as it has heads, maybe more. All other peoples are reflected in it. There are ancient Indian, English, Spanish, Norse natures among us - and again and again the desire for some true, distant home. All other peoples have one story, as a path from beginning to end. Our story is something else in the sense that it is the repeated attempt to find a beginning. The fate of England begins clearly and forcefully with the Normans, the French with the Franks; the Spanish with the Visigoths; the German begins uncertainly with the union of Saxony, Swabia, Bavaria, Franconia, Thuringia under a mystical crown. And like the map of 1400 or 1700, that’s the German “face”.

So too much character? Yes - that too. We are characteristic to the point of madness, in the higher minds a collection of originals. What kind of thinking systems, what kind of world views, what political ideas! Everyone writes their own German, everyone wears it differently, everyone believes differently, everyone wants differently. But is that our being or a role we play in anticipation of being true to ourselves? The German people have a soul full of surprising and startling possibilities of surpassing or failing. Nobody, who thought they knew us well, has ever counted correctly. Hence the mistrust of us from the outside and the

stronger mistrust among ourselves. We are uncomfortable in a world where one wants to be sure of the other. Ancient traits of the dark past, handed down in the course of history, have been consumed in us for lack of a history that is still alive. There are remnants of Old Norse instincts, as from the Icelandic sagas: the unsocial life, closed-mindedness, loneliness, stubbornness, defiance; more mixed heads than long heads. Could we, as a people, with greater happiness in political matters, really have been able to get rid of the noble society of the eighteenth century? Form as task, as high duty, as stimulus, contradicts our essence. We are informal with emphasis. We let ourselves go: lyrically, spiritually, socially, before us and before others. Least of all in music; but we have tried the verse forms of all peoples and times, and unbounded fantasy is our real kingdom. No nation would have needed education of a great kind by a noble society. But then, seriously, the tenacity, the quiet, patient adherence to the once accepted duty, in everything we have wrested from our lack of self-confidence. Nobody does our work for us, especially the economic and technical leaders. Future generations will marvel at reconstruction in four years after such a catastrophe [World War I] in disbelief.

And then the deciding thing: our unlimited need to serve, to follow, to worship anyone or anything, to be faithful as a dog, to believe blindly in spite of all objections. Again, this is an accumulated characteristic from the earliest ages, but it dominates the history of our princes, churches, and parties. No “thing,” no leader, nor the caricature of it, is so sure in any other land of an unconditional following: a secret treasure of tremendous power for the one who knows how to use it. Historically, we did not experience enough to be sceptics here. Every farmer from the Balkans, every carrier in an American port, gets behind the secrets of politics faster. Children we may be.

But again, the other, the inertia of the blood, the mind, the lack of a personal decision. “A German is capable of great things, but he is unlikely to do them,” Nietzsche said. To set in motion is difficult, trusting in ourselves, disinclined to one’s own pathos, we are certainly the farthest from the political theatricality of southern Europe, which even with a failure knows how to put on a performance. All in all, there is no other people today who are so in need of a Fuehrer to be someone who they can believe in

themselves, nor any that can be so much in need of a great leader. In the right hands, almost all our mistakes become advantages. What could then be moved out of the ordinary frame of political calculation.

In times of strict tradition of government habits such as diplomatic customs, as was the 18th century, such a character is condemned to long inactivity. The Germans had been forgotten as a political possibility, and Napoleon was very surprised when he suddenly met them on his way. Today, venerable forms of political existence whose age is an almost unassailable power have nothing left in the world. The violence appears as it is, the opportunity no less. History returns to the freedom of its primeval instincts, as its prey lies in the lands and seas.

So are we a contemporary people?

Introduction to Decline of the Birth Rate by Richard Korherr

(1927)

Spengler was asked to provide introductions to books on sundry issues. Among the most crucial issues, and one that is most symptomatic of the decay of a civilisation, is that of population decline. It is a question addressed in *The Decline of the West* as one that occurs when "intellect" replaces "blood," rationalism replaces instinct; life itself becomes an intellectual question. What hitherto fills those of a healthy culture with dread, from aristocrat to peasant – the end of the family line – is no longer a concern. Families are limited for economic and even social reasons. The will-to-life is exhausted in a People that has become historically passé, or what Spengler called "Fellaheen." Those with large families are looked at as a curiosity and perhaps with derision or amusement. Motherhood becomes a burden and is degraded in the name of "equality." Even legislation to try and enforce population regeneration such as that enacted by Augustus Caesar, fails to stop the crisis of dropping birth-rates, abortion becomes wide-spread, and immigration is required in an effort to bolster a work-force in the face of an ageing population. While such issues will sound familiar to the reader, this is all part of a cycle that has been repeated in civilisations in their epoch of decay over millennia.[1] Inspired by Spengler's *Decline of The West*, a doctoral thesis, "Decline of the Birthrate," by demographer Richard Korherr, was completed in 1925 and published in 1927. This was dedicated with permission to Spengler, as "the greatest thinker of our time." Spengler was as equally complimentary to Korherr. In 1927 the book reached Mussolini, who personally translated it into an Italian edition.

- § -

The following treatise, with its very clear, irrefutable, and harrowing statements, does not require a preface. It speaks for itself. Although details of it may have long been known and appreciated, a summary in this certainty has not yet been undertaken to my knowledge. Only with regard to the future of Germany may a few words be allowed.

To whom it has not yet become clear that all our great problems of the post-war period, the crisis of agriculture, in its wake the increasing rural exodus, the misery of homes, the taxation policy, the colonial question, the question of the eastern borders, the reparations and so on point to the crucial problem: the internal health of the living German national body - and the health of a people means in this case, fertility - knows nothing of history and nothing of the fate of great peoples and should therefore keep quiet about political things.

The German people are the least used of the white race.[2] That is the basic fact upon which all the political situations and possibilities of the future are based. It has not given its best blood to an overseas colonial empire for centuries like Spain, Holland and England, and in the 18th and 19th centuries did not consume its best families for great politics and in great revolutions. The German people were ahead of the rest in 1914 in terms of their racial health. In the World War, all peoples have lost so much of their best blood that the projection[3] as such has persisted. This is known in the world, and it is the basis for the most part the unmitigated hatred and distrust of us. Our policy has the one task to take the lead. All political problems are just the result of it.

The health of a living body is fertility. Fertility is political power. This is true of a peasant class as of a great people. In Europe, this has so far only been understood and expressed by Mussolini in its full extent. For Italy, which has neither coal nor capital, and because of its geographical position, it is incapable of acting as a real great power as long as other great powers rule the sea. The fertility of the Italian people is its only weapon, but one against which there is little defence in the long run.

On the other hand, Germany is under the leadership of parties, that is to say, our group of professional politicians, who at least try

to materially exploit the cowardly and senseless of all revolutions. That's why agriculture remains unprofitable, and the peasants are increasingly fleeing to the city - because the electorate of the city demands cheap bread, whether from America or from their native soil. That is why Germany is the last country in which the misery of homes, poisoning family life, is still maintained, because it makes tenants into radical voters and among them a discontented mood. The fight for the abolition of the abortion paragraph, a throng of writers who treat eroticism without consequences in novels, dramas and films, the girl culture that trains the female body not for motherhood, but for athletic achievements: all this is a forerunner of *panem et circenses*, which rose like a unanimous call from Roman civilisation.

And yet, in Germany, all this is not yet physically founded and therefore irreversible, unlike in America, England and France, where it sits deeper. It is Germany and only Germany, which must fulfil its historical mission because it has been the last of the white peoples to have matured and barely awoken.

But that is a question not of politics, as the word is understood, but of great politicians of whose manner we have almost lost memory. It is not the parliamentary talk and the party politics that are up to the tasks, but only personalities who know how to assert themselves and their goal.

---

1 See Bolton, *The Decline and Fall of Civilisations*, London, 2017.

2 That is, according to Spengler, they are still a "young people,' having not been historically spent.

3 Of population decline.

Nietzsche And His Century

An address delivered on October 15, 1924, Nietzsche's eightieth birthday, at the Nietzsche Archive, Weimar.

Nietzsche and Goethe were the two great influences Spengler ascribes to his thinking. Spengler was close to the Nietzsche Archive, directed by Nietzsche's devoted sister Elizabeth Forster-Nietzsche, and was invited by her to deliver this lecture at the Archive. As Elizabeth became closer to Hitler, Spengler finally severed associations with the Archive in 1935, the year that his final book, *The Hour of Decision*, was proscribed by the regime.

- § -

Looking back at the nineteenth century and letting its great men pass before the mind's eye, we can observe an amazing thing about the figure of Friedrich Nietzsche, something that was hardly noticeable in his own time. All the other outstanding personages, including Wagner, Strindberg, and Tolstoy, reflect to a certain degree the colour and shape of those years. Each of them was somehow bound up with the shallow optimism of the progress-mongers, with their social ethics and utilitarianism, their philosophy of matter and energy, pragmatism and "adaptation"; each of them made sacrifice after sacrifice to the spirit of the time. Only one person represents a radical departure from this pattern. If the word "untimely," which he himself coined, is applicable to anyone at all, then it is Nietzsche. One searches in vain throughout his whole life and all of his thought for any indication that he might have yielded inwardly to any vogue or fad.

In this respect he is the antithesis of, and yet in some ways profoundly related to, the second German of modern times whose life was one great symbol: Goethe. These are the only two notable Germans whose existence has profound significance apart from and in addition to their works. Because both were aware of this from the beginning and continually gave utterance to this awareness, their existence has become a treasure for our nation and an integral

part of its spiritual history.

It was Goethe's good fortune to be born at the high noon of Western culture, at a time of rich and mature intellectuality which he himself eventually came to represent. He had only to become the epitome of his own time in order to achieve the disciplined grandeur implied by those who later called him the "Olympian." Nietzsche lived a century later, and in the meantime a great change had occurred, one which we are only now able to comprehend. It was his fate to come into the world after the Rococo period, and to stand amid the totally cultureless 1860's and 1870's. Consider the streets and houses he had to live in, the clothing fashions, furniture, and social mores he had to observe. Consider the way people moved about in social circles in his day, the way they thought, wrote, and felt. Goethe lived at a time filled with respect for form; Nietzsche longed desperately for forms that had been shattered and abandoned. Goethe needed only to affirm what he saw and experienced around him; Nietzsche had no recourse but to protest passionately against everything contemporary, if he was to rescue anything his forebears had bequeathed to him as a cultural heritage. Both of these men strove during their whole lives for strict inner form and discipline. But the eighteenth century was itself "in form." It possessed the highest type of society that Western Europe has ever known. The nineteenth century had neither a distinguished society nor any other kind of formal attributes. Apart from the incidental customs of the urban upper class it possessed only the scattered remains, preserved with great difficulty, of aristocratic and middle-class tradition. Goethe was able to understand and solve the great problems of his time as a recognised member of his society, as we learn in Wilhelm Meister and Elective Affinities; Nietzsche could remain true to his task only by turning his back on society. His frightful loneliness stands as a symbol against Goethe's cheerful gregariousness. One of these great men gave shape to existing things; the other brooded over nonexisting things. One of them worked for a prevailing form; the other against a prevailing formlessness.

Aside from this, however, form was something very different for each of them. Of all the great German intellectuals, Nietzsche was the only born musician. All the others – thinkers, poets, and painters alike – have either been shapers of material or have taken

material apart. Nietzsche lived, felt, and thought by ear. He was, after all, hardly able to use his eyes. His prose is not "written," it is heard – one might even say sung. The vowels and cadences are more important than the similes and metaphors. What he sensed as he surveyed the ages was their melody, their meter. He discovered the musical keys of foreign cultures. Before him, no one knew of the tempo of history. A great many of his concepts – the Dionysian, the Pathos of Distance, the Eternal Recurrence – are to be understood quite musically. He sensed the rhythm of what is called nobility, ethics, heroism, distinction, and master morality. He was the first to experience as a symphony the image of history that had been created by scholarly research out of data and numbers – the rhythmic sequence of ages, customs, and attitudes.

He himself had music, just as he walked, spoke, dressed, experienced other people, stated problems, and drew conclusions. What *Bildung*[1] had been for Goethe, was for Nietzsche tact in the broadest sense: social, moral, historical, and linguistic tact, a feeling for the proper sequence of things, made all the keener by his suffering in an age that had very little of this feeling. Like Zarathustra, Goethe's Tasso was born of suffering, but Tasso succumbed to a feeling of weakness when challenged by a contemporary world which he loved and which he regarded as superior to himself. Zarathustra abhorred the contemporary world, and fled from it to distant worlds of the past and future.

The inability to feel "at home" in one's own time – that is a German curse. Because of the guilt of our past we came into bloom too late and too suddenly. Beginning with Klopstock and Lessing, we had to cover in eighty years a distance for which other nations had centuries. For this reason we never developed a formal inner tradition or a distinguished society that could act as guardian of such a tradition. We borrowed forms, motifs, problems, and solutions from all sides and struggled with them, whereas others grew up with them and in them. Our end was implicit in our beginning. Heinrich von Kleist discovered – he was the first to do so – the problematics of Ibsen at the same time that he strove to emulate Shakespeare. This tragic state of affairs produced in Germany a series of outstanding artistic personalities at a time when England and France had already gone over to producing literati – art and thought as a profession rather than a destiny. But

it also caused the fragmentation and frustration expressed in much of our art, the thwarting of final aims and artistic thoroughness.

Today we use the terms “Classical” and “Romantic” to denote the antithesis that appeared around 1800 everywhere in Western Europe, literary Petersburg included. Goethe was a Classic to the same extent that Nietzsche was a Romantic, but these words merely designate the predominant hues in their essential natures. Each of them also possessed the other potentiality, which at times urged its way to the foreground. Goethe, whose Faust-monologues and West-Eastern Divan are high points of Romantic sensibility, strove at all times to confine this urge for distance and boundlessness within clear and strict traditional forms. Similarly, Nietzsche often suppressed his acquired inclination for the Classical and rational, which held a twofold fascination for him by reason of temperament and philological profession, to what he termed the Dionysian, at least when he was evaluating. Both men were borderline cases. Just as Goethe was the last of the Classics, Nietzsche was, next to Wagner, the last of the Romantics. By their lives and their creations they exhausted the possibilities of these two movements. After them, it was no longer possible to render the meaning of the ages in the same words and images – the imitators of the Classical drama and the latter-day Zarathustras have proved this. Moreover, it is impossible to invent a new method of seeing and saying like theirs. Germany may well bring forth impressive formative minds in the future; however, fortunate for us, they will nonetheless be isolated occurrences, for we have reached the end of the grand development, and they will always be overshadowed by the two great figures of Goethe and Nietzsche.

An essential characteristic of Western Classicism was its intense preoccupation with the contemporary world. While seeking to control human drives that tend in opposite directions, it attempted to make the past and the future coalesce in the contemporary situation. Goethe’s dictum about the “Demands of the Day,” his “cheerful present,” imply after all that he called upon various kinds of past figures and events – his Greeks, his Renaissance, Götz von Berlichingen, Faust, and Egmont – in order to infuse them with the spirit of his own time. The result is that when reading such works as Tasso or Iphigenia we are not at all mindful of historical precedent. Just the opposite is the case with the Romantics; their proper

domain was remote places and times. They longed for withdrawal from the present to distant and foreign realms, to the past and future of history. None of them ever had a profound relationship with the things that surrounded him.

The Romantic is enticed by whatever is strange to his nature, the Classic by what is proper to his nature. Noble dreamers on the one hand, noble masters of dreams on the other. The one type adored the conquerors, rebels, and criminals of the past, or ideal states and supermen of the future; the other type construed statesmanship in practical, methodical terms or, like Goethe and Humboldt, even practiced it themselves. One of Goethe's great masterpieces is the conversation between Egmont and William of Orange. He loved Napoleon, for he was witness to his deeds in his own time and locality. He was never able to recreate artistically the violent personalities of the past; his Caesar went unwritten. But that is precisely the type of personality that Nietzsche worshipped – from a distance. At close range, as with Bismarck, he was repelled by them. Napoleon would also have repelled him. He would have seemed to him uncouth, shallow, and mindless, like the Napoleonic types that lived around him – the great European politicians and the rough-and-ready businessmen whom he never even saw, much less understood. He needed a vast distance between the Then and the Now in order to have a genuine relationship with a given reality. Thus he created his Superman and, almost as arbitrarily, the figure of Cesare Borgia.

These two tendencies are tragically present in the most recent German history. Bismarck was a Classic of politics. He based his calculations entirely on things that existed, things he could see and manipulate. The fanatical patriots neither loved nor understood him until his creative work appeared as a finished product, until he could be romantically transfigured as a mythic personage: "The Old Man of the Saxon Forests." On the other hand, Ludwig II of Bavaria, who perished as a Romantic and who never created or even could have created anything of enduring value, actually received this kind of love (without returning it), not only from the people at large, but also from artists and thinkers who should have looked more closely. Kleist is regarded in Germany with, at best, a reluctant admiration that is tantamount to rejection, particularly in those instances where he succeeded in overcoming his own Romantic nature. He is

inwardly quite remote from most Germans, unlike Nietzsche, whose nature and destiny were in many ways similar to the Bavarian king's, and who is instinctively honoured even by those who have never read him.

Nietzsche's longing for remoteness also explains his aristocratic taste, which was that of a completely lonely and visionary personality. Like the Ossian-type Romanticism that originated in Scotland, the early Classicism of the eighteenth century began on the Thames and was later taken across to the Continent. It is impossible to consider it apart from the Rationalism of the same period. The Classicists engaged in the act of creativity consciously and deliberately; they replaced free imagination with knowledge, at times even with scholarly erudition. They understood the Greeks, the Renaissance, and inevitably also the world of contemporary active affairs. These English Classicists, all of them of high social standing, helped create liberalism as a philosophy of life as it was understood by Frederick the Great and his century: the deliberate ignoring of distinctions that were known to exist in the practical life but were in any case not considered as obstacles; the rational preoccupation with matters of public opinion that could neither be gotten rid of nor hushed up, but that somehow had to be rendered harmless. This upper-class Classicism gave rise to English democracy – a superior form of tactics, not a codified political program. It was based on the long and intensive experience of a social stratum that habitually dealt with real and practicable possibilities, and that was therefore never in danger of losing its essential congeniality.

Goethe, who was also conscious of his social rank, was never an aristocrat in the passionate, theoretical sense – unlike Nietzsche, who lacked the habituation to regular practical experience. Nietzsche never really became familiar with the democracy of his time in all its strength and weakness. To be sure, he rebelled against the herd instinct with the wrath of his extremely sensitive soul, but the chief cause of his anger was to be found somewhere in the historical past. He was doubtless the first to demonstrate in such radical fashion how in all cultures and epochs of the past the masses count for nothing, that they suffer from history but do not create it, that they are at all times the pawns and victims of the personal will of individuals and classes born to be rulers. People

had sensed this often enough before, but Nietzsche was the first to destroy the traditional image of "humanity" as progress toward the solution of ideal problems through the agency of its leaders. Herein lies the immense difference between the historiography of a Niebuhr or a Ranke, which as an idea was likewise of Romantic origin, and Nietzsche's method of historical vision. His way of looking into the soul of past epochs and peoples overcame the mere pragmatic structure of facts and events.

Yet such a technique required detachment. English Classicism, which produced the first modern historian of Greece in George Grote – a businessman and practical politician – was quite exclusively the affair of higher society. It ennobled the Greeks by regarding them as peers, by "presenting" them in the truest sense of the word as distinguished, cultivated, intellectually refined human beings who at all times acted "in good taste" – even Harner and Pindar, poets whom the English school of classical philology was the first to prefer over Horace and Virgil. From the higher circles of English society this Classicism entered the only corresponding circles in Germany, the courts of the small principalities, where the tutors and preachers acted as intermediaries. The courtly atmosphere of Weimar was the world in which Goethe's life became the symbol of cheerful conviviality and purposeful activity. Weimar was the friendly centre of intellectual Germany, a place that offered calm satisfaction to a degree unknown by any other German writer, an opportunity for harmonious growth, maturing, and ageing that was Classical in a specifically German sense.

Next to this career there is the other, which likewise ended in Weimar. It started out in the seclusion of a Protestant pastor's home, the cradle of many if not most of Germany's great minds, and reached its height in the sun-drenched solitude of the Engadin. No other German has ever lived such an impassioned private existence, far removed from all society and publicity – though all Germans, even if they are "public" personalities, have a longing for such solitude. His intense yearning for friendship was in the last analysis simply his inability to lead a genuine social life, and thus it was a more spiritual form of loneliness. Instead of the friendly "Goethe house" on Weimar's Frauenplan, we see the joyless little cottages in Sils-Maria, the solitude of the mountains and the sea, and finally a solitary breakdown in Turin – it was the most thoroughly Romantic

career the nineteenth century ever offered.

Nevertheless, his need to communicate was stronger than he himself believed, much stronger at any rate than Goethe's, who was one of the most taciturn of men despite the social life that surrounded him. Goethe's Elective Affinities is a secretive book, not to speak of Wilhelm Meister's Years of Wandering and Faust II. His most profound poems are monologues. The aphorisms of Nietzsche are never monologues; nor are the Night Song and the Dionysus Dithyrambs completely monologues. An invisible witness is always present, always watching. That is why he remained at all times a believing Protestant. All the Romantics lived in schools and coteries, and Nietzsche invented something of the sort by imagining that his friends were, as listeners, his intellectual peers. Or again, he created in the remote past and future a circle of intimates, only to complain to them, like Novalis and Hölderlin, of his loneliness. His whole life was filled with the torture and bliss of renunciation, of the desire to surrender and to force his inner nature, to bind himself in some way to something that always proved to be foreign to himself. Yet that is how he developed insight into the soul of epochs and cultures that could never reveal their secrets to self-assured, Classical minds.

This organic pessimism of his being explains the works and the sequence in which they appeared. We who were not able to experience the great flourishing of materialism in the mid-nineteenth century should never cease to be amazed at the audacity that went into the writing, at such a tender age and contrary to the opinions of contemporary philological scholarship, of *The Birth of Tragedy*. The famous antithesis of Apollo and Dionysus contains much more than even today's average reader can comprehend. The most significant thing about that essay was not that its author discovered an inner conflict in "Classical" Greece, the Greece that had been the purest manifestation of "humanity" for all others except perhaps Bachofen and Burckhardt. More important still was that even at that age he possessed the superior vision that allowed him to peer into the heart of whole cultures as if they were organic, living individuals. We need only read Mommsen and Curtius to notice the tremendous difference. The others regarded Greece simply as the sum of conditions and events occurring within a certain span of time and space. Our present-day method of looking

at history owes its origin, but not its depth, to Romanticism. In Nietzsche's day, history, as far as Greece and Rome were concerned, was little more than applied philology, and as far as the Western peoples were concerned little more than applied archival research. It invented the idea that history began with written records.

The liberation from this view came out of the spirit of music. Nietzsche the musician invented the art of feeling one's way into the style and rhythm of foreign cultures, aside from and often in contradiction to the written documents.[2] But what did written documents matter anyway? With the word "Dionysus"[3] Nietzsche discovered what the archaeologists eventually brought to light thirty years later – the underworld and the undersoul of Classical culture, and ultimately the spiritual force that underlies all of history. Historical description had become the psychology of history. The eighteenth century and Classicism, including Goethe, believed in "culture" – a single, true, mental and moral culture as the task of a unified humanity. From the very beginning Nietzsche spoke quite unforcedly of "cultures" as of natural phenomena that simply began at a certain time and place, without reason or goal or whatever an all-too-human interpretation might wish to make of it. "At a certain time" – the point was made clear from the very first time in Nietzsche's book that all of these cultures, truths, arts, and attitudes are peculiar to a mode of existence that makes its appearance at one certain time and then disappears for good. The idea that every historical fact is the expression of a spiritual stimulus, that cultures, epochs, estates, and races have a soul like that of individuals – this was such a great step forward in historical depth-analysis that even the author himself was at the time not aware of its full implications.

However, one of the things the Romantic yearns for is to escape from himself. This yearning, together with the great misfortune of having been born in that particular period in history caused Nietzsche to serve as a herald for the most banal form of realism in his second book, *Human, All-Too-Human*. These were the years when Western Rationalism, after abandoning its glorious beginnings with Rousseau, Voltaire, and Lessing, ended as a farce. Darwin's theories, together with the new faith in matter and energy, became the religion of the big cities; the soul was regarded as a chemical process involving proteins, and the meaning of the universe boiled

down to the social ethics of enlightened philistines. Not a single fibre of Nietzsche's being was party to these developments. He had already given vent to his disgust in the first of his *Untimely Meditations*, but the scholar in him envied Chamfort and Vauvenargues and their light-hearted and somewhat cynical manner of treating serious topics in the style of the *grand monde*. The artist and enthusiast in him was perplexed by the massive sobriety of an Eugen Dühring, which he mistook for true greatness. Priestly character that he was, he proceeded to unmask religion as prejudice. Now the goal of life was knowledge, and the goal of history became for him the development of intelligence. He said this in a tone of ridicule that served to heighten his own passion, precisely because it hurt to do so, and because he suffered from the unrealisable longing to create in the midst of his own time a seductive picture of the future that would contrast with everything he was born into.

While the ecstatic utilitarianism of the Darwinian school was extremely remote from his way of thinking, he took from it certain secret revelations that no true Darwinist ever dreamed of. In *The Dawn of Day* and *The Gay Science* there appeared, in addition to a way of looking at things that was meant to be prosaic and even scornful, another technique of examining the world – a restrained, quiet, admiring attitude that penetrated deeper than any mere realist could ever hope to achieve. Who, before Nietzsche, had ever spoken in the same way of the soul of an age, an estate, a profession, of the priest and the hero, or of man and woman? Who had ever been able to summarise the psychology of whole centuries in an almost metaphysical formula? Who had ever postulated in history, rather than facts and "eternal truths," the types of heroic, suffering, visionary, strong, and diseased life as the actual substance of events as they happen?

That was a wholly new kind of living forms, and could have been discovered only by a born musician with a feeling for rhythm and melody. Following this presentation of the physiognomy of the ages of history, a science of which he was and will always be the creator, he reached to the outer limits of his vision to describe the symbols of a future, his future, which he needed in order to be cleansed of the residue of contemporary thought. In one sublime moment he conjured the image of Eternal Recurrence, as it had been vaguely

surmised by German mystics in the Middle Ages – an endless circling in the eternal void, in the night of immeasurable eons, a way to lose one's soul utterly in the mysterious depths of the cosmos, regardless of whether such things are scientifically justifiable or not. Into the midst of this vision he placed the Superman and his prophet, Zarathustra, representing the incarnate meaning of human history, in all its brevity, on the planet that was his home. All three of these creations were completely distant, impossible to relate to contemporary conditions. For this very reason they have exerted a curious attraction on every German soul. For in every German soul there is a place where dreams are dreamed of social ideals and a finer future for mankind. Goethe lacked such a corner in his soul, and that is why he never became a truly popular personage. The people sensed this lack, and thus they called him aloof and frivolous. We shall never overcome this reverie of ours; it represents within us the unlived portion of a great past.

Once having arrived at this height, Nietzsche posed the question as to the value of the world, a question that had accompanied him since childhood. By doing so he brought to an end the period of Western philosophy that had considered the types of knowledge as its central problem. This new question likewise had two answers: a Classical and a Romantic answer or, to put it in the terms of the time, a social and an aristocratic answer. "Life has value to the same degree as it serves the totality" – that was the answer of the educated Englishmen who had learned at Oxford to distinguish between what a person stated as his considered opinion and what the same person did at decisive moments as a politician or businessman. "Life is all the more valuable, the stronger its instincts are" – that was the answer given by Nietzsche, whose own life was delicate and easily injured. Be that as it may, for the very reason that he was remote from the active life he was able to grasp its mysteries. His ultimate understanding of real history was that the Will to Power is stronger than all doctrines and principles, and that it has always made and forever will make history, no matter what others may prove or preach against it. He did not concern himself with the conceptual analysis of "will"; to him the most important thing was the image of active, creative, destructive Will in history. The "concept" of will gave way to the "aspect" of will. He did not teach, he simply pointed matters out: "Thus it was, and thus it shall be." Even if theoretical and priestly individuals will it a thousand

times differently, the primeval instincts of life will still emerge victorious.

What a difference between Schopenhauer's world view and this one! And between Nietzsche's contemporaries, with their sentimental plans for improving the world, and this demonstration of hard facts! Such an accomplishment places this last Romantic thinker at the very pinnacle of his century. In this we are all his pupils, whether we wish to be or not, whether we know him well or not. His vision has already imperceptibly conquered the world. No one writes history any more without seeing things in his light.

He undertook to evaluate life using facts as the sole criteria, and the facts taught that the stronger or weaker will to succeed determines whether life is valuable or worthless, that goodness and success are almost mutually exclusive. His image of the world reached its culmination with a magnificent critique of morality in which, instead of preaching morality, he evaluated the moralities that have arisen in history – not according to any "true" moral system but according to their success.[4] This was indeed a "revaluation of all values," and although we now know that he misstated the antithesis of Christian and master-morality as a result of his personal suffering during the 1880's, nonetheless the ultimate antithesis of human existence lay behind his statement; he sought it, and sensed it, and believed that he had captured it with his formula.

If instead of "master morality" we were to say the instinctive practice of men who are determined to act, and instead of "Christian morality" the theoretical ways in which contemplative persons evaluate, then we would have before us the tragic nature of all mankind, whose dominant types will forever misunderstand, combat, and suffer from each other. Deed and thought, reality and ideal, success and redemption, strength and goodness – these are forces that will never come to terms with one another. Yet in historical reality it is not the ideal, goodness, or morality that prevails – their kingdom is not of this world – but rather decisiveness, energy, presence of mind, practical talent. This fact cannot be gotten rid of with laments and moral condemnations. Man is thus, life is thus, history is thus.

Precisely because all action was foreign to him, because he knew

only how to think, Nietzsche understood the fundamental essence of the active life better than any great active personality in the world. But the more he understood, the more shyly he withdrew from contact with action. In this way his Romantic destiny reached fulfilment. Under the force of these last insights, the final stage of his career took shape in strict contrast to that of Goethe, who was not foreign to action but who regarded his true calling as poetry, and therefore restrained his actions cheerfully.

Goethe, the Privy Councillor and Minister, the celebrated focal point of European intellect, was able to confess during his last year of life, in the final act of his Faust, that he looked upon his life as having attained fulfilment. “Tarry now, thou art so fair!” – that is a phrase expressive of the most blissful satiety, spoken at the moment when the active physical work is completed under Faust’s command, to endure now and forevermore. It was the great and final symbol of the Classicism to which this life had been dedicated, and which led from the controlled cultural education of the eighteenth century to the controlled exercise of personal talent of the nineteenth.

Yet one cannot create distance, one can only proclaim it. Just as Faust’s death brought a Classical career to an end, the mind of the loneliest of wanderers vanished with a curse upon his age during those mysterious days in Turin, when he watched the last mists disappear from his image of the world and the highest peaks come ever clear into view. This puzzling final episode of his life is the very reason Nietzsche’s existence has had the stronger influence on the world ever since. Goethe’s life was a full life, and that means that it brought something to completion.[5] Countless Germans will honour Goethe, live with him, and seek his support; but he can never transform them. Nietzsche’s effect is a transformation, for the melody of his vision did not end with his death. The Romantic attitude is eternal; though its form may at times be unified and complete, its thought never is. It will always conquer new areas, either destroying them or changing them radically. Nietzsche’s type of vision will pass on to new friends and enemies, and these in turn will hand it down to other followers and adversaries. Even if someday no one reads his works any longer, his vision will endure and be creative.

His work is not a part of our past to be enjoyed; it is a task that

makes servants of us all. As a task it is independent of his books and their subject matter, and thus a problem of German destiny. In an age that does not tolerate otherworldly ideals and takes vengeance on their authors, when the only thing of recognised value is the kind of ruthless action that Nietzsche baptized with the name of Cesare Borgia, when the morality of the ideologues and world improvers is limited more radically than ever to superfluous and innocuous writing and speech-making – in such an age, unless we learn to act as real history wants us to act, we will cease to exist as a people. We cannot live without a form of wisdom that does not merely console in difficult situations, but helps one to get out of them. This kind of hard wisdom made its first appearance in German thought with Nietzsche, despite the fact that it was cloaked in thoughts and impressions he had gathered from other sources. To the people most famished for history in all the world, he showed history as it really is. His heritage is the obligation to live history in the same way.

---

1 Cultural education.

2 Spengler's approach to history.

3 The irrational, ecstatic, "Dionysian" versus the disciplined, rational, retrained "Apollonian," the unconscious and the conscious, dark and light, described by Nietzsche (*The Birth of Tragedy*, 1872), comprised the tension of a creative dichotomy that formed Greek culture.

4 Nietzsche saw the use of "morality," including religion, as a strategy to weaken the will of one's enemies. Today there is a universal morality of "human rights" and "democracy" which is used by the USA and oligarchs such as George Soros for conquering rival states.

5 Nietzsche suffered a mental collapse due to a brain tumour, maliciously claimed by antagonists to have been syphilis. " 'Madness' of Nietzsche was cancer, not syphilis," *The Telegraph*, May 4, 2003, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/3313279/Madness-of-Nietzsche-was-cancer-not-syphilis.html

Tasks of the Nobility

Speech given on May 16, 1924 at the German Nobles Day in Wroclaw

In this talk Spengler states that it is the duty of the German nobility to select and train a new breed of leaders, with the noble's sense of duty and service. Germany must look beyond its narrow, imposed confines, toward world horizons. The best example to emulate are the young Englishmen schooled in service in the British colonies. A permanent leadership stratum, trained for great tasks, can overcome the petty actions of the politicians, and give permanence to policy regardless of party programmes and parliamentary elections. What is required is a civil service with a profound sense of duty and ability.

- § -

If I allow myself to say something about the tasks of the German nobility today, I must confine myself to their political side in the short time available.

Virtually everything has been destroyed by the revolution, which is one of the prerequisites for successful politics. Above all, this includes the social and political structure of the nobility as an organic layer within the nation. Every large country has to cope with domestic and foreign political tasks which presuppose the existence of a uniformly thinking, feeling and acting stratum, without which a logical solution of these tasks cannot be guaranteed. Where this layer is lacking, high politics soon very much depends on the presence of very talented individual personalities. In Germany, this superstructure is shaken by the revolution to the depths - it is probably the most disastrous result of the revolution. If the revolution dissolved the army, so it can be rebuilt; a lost position of power can be reconquered; but a national body wounded from within is very difficult to cure, even if the shock of society has not led to the dissolution of its leadership stratum.

World history teaches that this supporting, breeding, and educative class usually contained a nuptial core. A well-known example is Rome, where the racial characteristics of the people in a number of large families had evolved to pure culture. Every true nobility is within a nation its “race”, defined not only by descent but epitomising certain instincts of commanding, organising, bargaining, the feeling of duty, as a superiority in all areas of practical national life.[1] The nobility is a thoroughly political concept: Politics understood as a war with the means of intellectual and social tactics; Foreign and internal diplomacy was never anything but a duel with bloodless weapons; in the capacity of a nobility, often enough, lay the fate of a whole nation. Due to political defeats, however, the nobility are first hit and thrown off track. This is the case in Germany today, to a very high degree. But especially Germany, which, owing to its miserable development since the Thirty Years’ War, has not received a noble bourgeois society in the manner of the English and French, cannot dispense with the nobility as the centre of its leading classes. Not only for its own sake, therefore, does the nobility have a duty to reconquer their former meaning, not by attempting to fight for the return of old privileges, which would be futile, but through education, an education that Frederick William I proved possible in himself and his officials and officers, in creating a superior leadership class. In our political and geographical situation we cannot depend on the accidental emergence of a Bismarck or Napoleon. England gives us a great lesson in this. It has rarely had a brilliant leader of the rank of Pitt over the last 200 years. But all the middle-range leaders could surround themselves with a layer of co-workers who instinctively understood and mastered the necessary ends and means, and these could rely on the instincts of the English upper class, those of the families of nobles, especially the gentry which was interspersed and educated. Only in this way was it possible for England to progress on its trajectory, even though for decades it had no great Prime Minister.

This instinct of a stratum cannot be replaced by patriotic programmes and views. Views are based on reasons, but the course of world history is not geared to a programme, and better reasons never guarantee better success. The political instinct, however, is not learned at universities and from books and newspapers, but it is aroused, as in earlier centuries by education, and in England today

through social discipline and personal contact between young men and politically experienced men in distinguished clubs.[2] For practical success it is not important to rationally dissect the great facts and situations, but to feel at first glance what possibilities rest in them and which means are applicable. Any battle with the barest weapons, every hunt, every game has its emotional logic, and this, not the logic of philosophy, is also that of political success.[3] England, in particular, shows the dangers of misunderstanding these facts. In recent years England has had two heads of state, who have emerged from internal politics, not to say the trade union movement, and who, through the pressure of events, succeeded in getting foreign affairs into their hands: Lloyd George and Ramsay Macdonald. Both of them have worsened the situation of England in a fatal way; that this did not lead to a pronounced defeat, England owed to the instincts of its society, which maintained the general course of politics even against the will of the ruling personalities.

If you look at today's world situation, which since the world war with increasing speed drives the final decisions, then you realise that the People who will ultimately win the race are those whose leadership stratum has the superior capabilities. Whether the army is shattered, whether the economy has been shattered, whether foreign possessions have been lost, all of this is becoming less important than the question of whether the leadership stratum, as the backbone of the nation, has remained efficient. When the Romans were finally able to deal with all their opponents and the Roman Empire was Roman, they owed it not to the intelligence of the Forum, nor to the mere training of their legions, but to the stratum of old families that retained the political tradition even after Canna and after the civil wars of Marius and Sulla, which was far superior to the Carthaginians and Greeks.

We Germans stand in a present like no country for a century. We live cut off as on an island; we are not even masters in our own country; we have to get a French army on German soil with German money. And yet, by a superior policy, we could conquer a position which turns our geographical situation from a disadvantage to the advantage: between the coming Russia and the English naval power in the midst of an internal crisis. But for this we must educate people who, in addition to the old-Prussian characteristics of discipline, responsibility and renunciation, possess the political

virtues that have hitherto been the result of a rare coincidence and not of social discipline. This is the real task of the German nobility. Precisely for this reason, certain features which were as good in all the strata of our people at the outbreak of the World War are to be followed with particular concern. Since we have no more colonies, we think in political matters in ways that are too inland and provincial. While the "native soil" is indeed the basis of a healthy nation and, in particular, of a healthy nobility, it must not represent the finality of political considerations. With its 60 million inhabitants, Germany is a very small country on the surface of the earth and therefore also a political entity that can and should only be viewed in connection with world politics. Precisely because of our present weakness, it is even more important than before the war, that every politician has a constant overview of the situation and events in the Pacific Ocean, in South Africa, in North America, that he keeps up to date with the newspapers and personal communications on moods and opinions over there. We can only determine our fate if we are always aware of the world political situation. But that's exactly what's missing everywhere.

We have become a big nation too fast. Barely fifty years ago, at the time of our grandfathers, there were still a handful of German countries, each having only one local policy and they hardly knew world politics in the English sense. We are far from overcoming this narrowness. An infinite amount of what is folkish and national behind the words is based on a complete unfamiliarity with political thinking and actions outside of Germany, and a fateful underestimation of hostile superiority in politics, points of view, and methods. We had become overnight a people of global industry, world trade and naval power, so that there are still countless Germans who perceive the aims of the business circles and interests as unnatural, because their horizon extends beyond Germany. But a German policy since Bismarck is only possible if it is anchored in the whole vastness of today's world contexts, and if the leadership stratum considers its prime duty is to stand up for these wider interests, to educate a policy of wide horizons and superior means. In this I see immediately the great mission of the German nobility and above all its youth. They do not have it easy in this regard. Every young Englishman from this class has been in the colonies, and by personal contact with the circles who govern or are economically active there, has acquired a sense of the true meaning

of political business. Our youth came out too little before the war. Instead of being called to service in India, Egypt, America it was called to attend the Lecture Hall. The first close contact of English youth from the leadership stratum with great politics took place in the colonies, as one went out as a private secretary of a governor or ambassador to the countries, but with us – it must be admitted openly – the experiences of German youth was usually by patriotic books, festivals and lectures.

Today foreign countries are almost closed to us for political and economic reasons. It is therefore all the more necessary to take every opportunity to get to know these countries, by studying their newspapers, assemblies, economic institutions, statistics, laws, and establishing personal relationships with significant personalities in the decisive circles. Such political study tours should be undertaken, prepared, and utilised as often as possible, as work, not as "recreation". At home, however, a conscious education is necessary in order to get to know exactly the present-day spirit of the great powers.

It is a good German quality to be able to put yourself in the spirit of strange times and people and this should be utilised. It is utterly wrong to express the legitimate feeling of the vanquished to the victor by refusing to immerse oneself in his world, to seriously engage with him at all. It should become a daily habit, especially for the young nobility, to constantly read the leading newspapers of the foreign powers, to study the most important pamphlets, to keep abreast of the political and public opinion of leading magazines and letters. Only in this way can German seclusion be overcome spiritually. About the return to the so-called old ideals, which easily play a disastrous role in our national festivals and which in the mid-twentieth century have become limited, provincial, hopeless ideals, this is no way to proceed into the future. The English Conservative always distinguished himself as a politician by being even more modern in his means and ends than the majority of Liberals.

I therefore conclude by issuing the following reminder: mentally drop the barriers that set you aside from the main ideas of world politics. World politics is destroying the countries that are not up to it mentally. Learn from the English nobility, who had a very difficult position in a farmer's land, that there is no obstacle or limit to success for internal superiority. Strip off the last remnants of the

aversion to world horizons, world trade and world industry. In Germany, wherever talents have been bred according to plan, we have had brilliant results: in the army, in technology, in industry, in world trade. We would be able to achieve the same in politics. But then we must know that politics today is something different from the conservative policies of 1860 and even of 1900; and above all, the nobility must become aware of the task.

---

1 This was Spengler's spiritual definition of a "race," the duration of the highest qualities of a culture. For example the Samurai would be the highest representative of the Japanese "race", or the patrician families of the Roman.

2 A leadership class can be created by establishing the appropriate institutions for its selection and training, even when nobility by birth has been extinguished or overthrown.

3 What a leadership class requires most of all is sound intuition and instinct.

Political Duties of German Youth

Speech before the University Ring of German Art, Würzburg, February 26, 1924

Spengler analyses the geopolitical, diplomatic, economic and political situations in Germany, and the state of party politics, including the "national movement." He calls not for parades and slogans but for a generation of youth to seriously study the real problems facing Germany, as they relate to the world. He calls for a new leadership stratum, self-educated and disciplined, willing and able to serve a great leader of the Bismarckian model, committed to realism.

- § -

Germany is currently in a state of deceptive calm. The commercial fate of an individual has managed to stop the terrible decline of our economy, in so far as it is connected with the decay of our currency, against all expectations - externally - but that alone has sufficed to arouse the opinion, in the widest circles, that the situation of our people has really improved. We have become so destitute, so poor, and by the collapse of our power and our hopes, and by what has taken their place for the past five years, we have neglected every measure of greatness and dignity, that the very fact that this is everyday small business life of the individual begins to play in quieter forms, perfectly sufficient to awaken in millions the feeling of hope.

On the other hand, we experience a spectacle that is even more oppressive. We have forgotten what we were yesterday as a people in the midst of world peoples. We are not only miserable, we have also become dishonourable. The male right, which is granted to every small people to protect themselves with the weapon in the hand, has been taken from us. We are no longer in the ranks of independent nations. We have become the mere object of the will, hatred, and baggage of others. While all around the world armies and fleets are being prepared for new decisions, we are paying a

French army on German soil with German money - that is our anti-militarism. And how many of us are among those who feel burning with shame? For countless people, it is a condition that one must and can come to terms with, in order to build up a small measure of happiness in this shadow. For five years we have had a system of governance that makes it possible to live well despite the misery and shame - if one belongs to it. There are thousands who feed on it in party and state offices, through diets and good relations, and thousands who do not find the situation for their private businesses quite so that they should want a change.

German youth does not share these views. Perhaps the most comforting thing among the comforting features of the present is that this reconciliation with an ignominious fate is as unconvincing among the youth of our educated estates as in any other layer of the people. Despite the nameless misery in which it lives and resides, for the most part for me the hope is justified that the Germans, the youngest and most unsophisticated among the peoples of Europe, will once again be enabled by the rising generation to play a historical role, which is appropriate for his inner strength, for his unbroken health and his creative qualities.

But if this mission, which in my innermost conviction is reserved for you, should one day be fulfilled, then the youth must realise how infinitely hard, long, and self-disciplined the way is, how little easy it is to do this task, and what you all know and must do to find a way to a greater future for a poor and unarmed country. It is your sacred duty, gentlemen, not only to be enthusiastic, but to educate. The mere will leads to nothing. Politics is a difficult and hard art to learn.

Those who want to recognise the goals and means necessary for our homeland first need a sure view of the world in tremendous tension. The war did not bring relief to the world situation. It has postponed the big questions, redesigned them, but not solved them. And the fate of Germany in its geographical situation is unfavourable, with its military impotence and complete isolation.

The Great War, in its great historical development and decay, cuts as deeply as Napoleon did. To be clear, one must know how much of what existed before 1914, has today become impossible. Try to imagine what the world looked like when the Bastille storm

hit, and then, after the Battle of Waterloo, when the Vienna Congress reorganised Europe for a century. The 18th-century state system fought with very small salaried professional armies. 10-20,000 men meant a power. As a result, the cabinets easily decided to use these troops. The battles were so minor, in terms of space and effort, that, with the exception of the directly devastated lands in the larger countries, no one actually cared about a war waged on any frontier. The losses of a political and economic nature, even after years and in the case of defeat, were of little importance: the Seven Years War was a great exception for Prussia, and the peace settlements, even in the harshest of cases, were so mild that every government in less important disputes preferred to make a military decision. The mercenary armies had little personal and emotional connection with the rest of the population, so that the loss of human beings had little effect on the mood of these peoples. The “peoples” did not lead the wars of that time at all. Even the Battle of Rossbach that aroused the German national spirit, was not won by a People.

Then comes the time of the French Revolution and of Napoleon: The professional armies become people’s armies, which comprise the entire youth of a nation. Hundreds of thousands will turn out, and by the end of the Napoleonic era, mass armies will be in Europe, whose figures would have seemed insane twenty years earlier. And now something very strange is happening since Waterloo. When old-style diplomacy had redrawn the map of Europe, these armies were not sent home; they remained as formations, and it is the concept of the standing army that has dominated the political situation and its forms throughout the world for a full century.

Armies, in which every able-bodied youth had to enter in a very rapid order, armies, which thus remained connected by a thousandfold kinship with the population, their dearest, their pride and their care, stood from Spain to Russia in the total strength of hundreds of thousands, and last of all millions ready to march, without any personal opinion, a terrible, blind, ever-increasing tool in the hands of the governments, so that the responsible diplomacy, increasingly more difficult, decided to pass from the stage of negotiations to the uncertainty of bloody conflict. For in the meantime the armies had been so changed by technical inventions,

the use of railroads, telegraphy, equipment and agility in wide spaces, that no one more surely overlooked the course of the "war of the future", every calculation became questionable, but with it came the responsibility that is so monstrous that all the great conflicts which the inexorable course of history conjured were postponed and set aside, which can probably be described as a style of fear of final decisions.

But with the fact that these mass armies were really tested to the utmost limit of their efficiency during World War I and partly consumed, a profound change has taken place in the forms of political events, and today we are faced with the fact that the situation of the former Century is in no way comparable with the future. We must familiarise ourselves with the idea that the appearance of the standing armies is from the past. It makes no difference whether on paper one or the other or all states of Europe have standing armies, whether general compulsory military service is abolished or not. The fact is that something new is emerging everywhere today behind the external form of standing armies of the old kind, inside or outside the formations. It is the union of men who, out of enthusiasm for a cause, are ready to commit their lives, communities of conviction, forged together not by service, but by an idea. That was also possible in the 19th century and we experienced it in 1870 and especially in 1914, but it does not belong to the army at that time. Now we are approaching the time when everywhere in Europe we can no longer expect a general mobilisation of the able-bodied population, not even in France, but with an appeal to those who are willing to volunteer for a cause. Everywhere in and behind the standing troops form committees, circles, organisations like the *Action Française*[1] and the fascists, who see this as their real task, and with that, small armies will appear again on the soil of Europe, but now their own convictions or loyalty to a leader is crucial. The essence of the standing armies was that political opinions within the service did not have a role to play. It is part of the nature of these future combat units that this opinion extends beyond the federation itself and exerts influence on the politics of the whole country. A glance at Italy, France, Russia and other countries shows just how far this development has progressed. But in the future, therefore, we shall have to reckon with a very different form of relations between states, with a completely different and much easier way of disposing of diplomacy, of

choosing to go on a military course. You have to know that when you think about the future of Germany.[2]

But the changes continue. As the size of the standing armies made a decision on European soil itself more and more dangerous and obscure, a way out, which until now has remained virtually hidden under the name of colonial politics, developed. The increasingly hasty occupation of further routes in foreign parts of the world was apparently for economic reasons and initially these had certainly the preponderance. Since the middle of the 18th century however, hunger for colonial possessions was no longer due solely to the need for raw materials and outlets, but also to the fact that fleets standing next to the standing armies appeared. The war fleets were formed at the time of Napoleon from wooden ships with sails. They were essentially tied to the coast and dependent on wind and weather. But since the American Civil War (1861-65) they have been equipped with steam engines, armoured and equipped with the heaviest calibres: a brand new formidable weapon that had not been tested on a large scale and that created a growing fear in diplomacy, on which the destiny of a country is dependent. And so colonial policy became perhaps a completely unconscious means of avoiding or anticipating the decision to sail. As well as decades of land warfare through the pace of army expansion and the invention of a brand new terrible weapon that had not been tested in great circumstances, and which, in diplomacy, created a growing fear of making the fate of a country dependent on it.

The “sea war of the future” described a thousand times in advance, was again and again replaced by the race for the possession of theatres of war and bases. England realised that first. In fact, the most expansive colonial policy in Africa and Asia was coastal directed, which possessed strategic meaning. The division of China into spheres of interest (since 1894) was basically just about ports and estuaries that could serve as bases for modern fleets. Therein lay the tremendous importance of Malta, Aden and Singapore. And it finally came to light that a naval fleet had won a war in advance, if it held all eligible coastal areas safely in the hand, so the enemy fleet could not appear at all. Remember the problem of how the Russian fleet was to be shipped to Japan in 1905, since the English ports were closed to coalmining. An English Prime Minister once declared that England’s borders were over

wherever the coasts of other countries began. That was absolutely right for fifty years. But with that, the English fleet had already won all future naval wars, also the world war. She could later stay calm in the harbours. The system of bases won for them. Therein lay an evasion of the decision between mass armies on the mainland. And here, too, has undergone a sweeping change. This has hardly been noticed in its tremendous scope, but it may dominate the world politics of the next decades. The previous situation was based on the fact that the mainland of Africa and Asia, and indeed South America and Australia, were politically quite passive: the coast was strategically billed from the sea, not from the hinterland.

At the moment, however, a transformation is taking place in Africa that would have been thought impossible recently. When Napoleon made the expedition to Egypt, he had to rely on coincidence that the fleet got there unhindered, and after their destruction he was confined to Egypt. Today France is proceeding as planned to militarise the continent of Africa. Hundreds of thousands of Negroes are trained militarily by the introduction of compulsory service from Senegal to Tunis. A network of strategic railways is under construction between Algiers, Sudan and Lake Chad, so that today there is already a land bridge which makes it possible to move armies from Morocco to the Guinea coast and one day to Egypt or the Congo. Since their use in the World War, the Negroes have become aware of their power and togetherness. A growing sense of self fills them all from the Senegalese to the Kaffirs, and it is constantly fuelled by propaganda emanating from the Negroes of America. Thus, a whole continent enters into active politics, all the more so since Islam has converted with tremendous success the Negro population north of the equator, and has awakened not only in its world view but also politically aroused and attached to a vast invisible system, that of Baghdad China and from Mecca to the Atlantic Ocean. Whether these new powers will be at a critical moment on the side of the English, French or other is a dark question on which an infinite number depends.

The same is true of Asia. In the east, the 19th century was dominated by the fact that Russia from Poland to the Amur was a European state. Today we have the feeling that, on the other side of the Vistula, a tremendous mass of people are in a state of emotional agitation, of which no one knows what effects they can suddenly

trigger. I want to give a single example. Around 1920, a Baron von Unger-Sternberg appeared as a CFA commander in Central Asia, who in a short time succeeded in bringing together a troop of allegedly 150,000 men, who in their turn absolutely surrendered to him, who were excellently trained and armed, and had followed him unquestioningly. This man was murdered by the Bolsheviks after a short time.[3] If he had been successful, it is impossible to predict what events would take place today in Asia and what shape the map of the world might have assumed.[4] There is no doubt, that a national-Asian army of one hundred thousand men, as it stands in Turkestan, has the fate of Asia in its hands. Whether she turns against India, China, or Persia, she will find thousands of followers at every step forward, and there is no power in this whole continent that would seriously resist an enthusiastic onslaught of this kind. But with that, the battlefield, which during the World War confined itself to the soil of Europe to the western edge of Russia, extends over the entire block of land of the old world. This land mass can be involved in events in a surprisingly short time, for which the previous century offers no example.

And that may be an all-round change for the security of the English world power. If the 19th century, despite the standing mass army and precisely because of it, was the real glory days of the sea-ruling states, and the navy alone decided on the ownership of African and Asian countries, today the fact of strategic overland lines is in development. The English power was based on the fact that the road from England to its possessions in the Indian Ocean and the South Seas was exclusively a sea route. At the moment when the big land mass awakes from its political slumber, there are also land routes. But a fleet that finds the land occupied has become ineffective. A naval power, which can no longer exert any effect on the hinterland by coastal points, has ceased to be a power. It is within the next possibilities that the whole problem of control of the sea is fundamentally changed, that new power lines which pass over gigantic land areas, enables a whole new type of continental barrier. It is therefore also possible that Germany's geographical situation, hitherto a fatality for our people, will have a completely changed political significance, and that the foreign political combinations of the time after Bismarck will be replaced by surprisingly new aspects.

This political turn now corresponds to an economic one of equal importance, which also transformed the economic style of the twentieth century, just as the Napoleonic era changed that of the nineteenth. We are still predominantly of the opinion that "Marxism" is the real opponent of the existing social and economic order. This has been an outdated picture for a few years. The course of economic development shows a surprising tendency as soon as one frees oneself from the ideas of the materialistic economics of the last century, and examines in detail the facts of the last two hundred years for their deeper meaning. It is wrong, according to the assertion of Marx and others, to seek the most important epoch of the modern economy in the first half of the last century. The real turning point is much the same as in military-political matters in the midst of the epoch of Napoleon. In the case of Frederick the Great, suppose that somebody had crossed any country in Europe on an airplane: he would have seen from above a throng of people and a lot of economically working things, estates, factories and commercial enterprises. It would have been very easy to determine which people were owners and who belonged to individual things. Anyone crossing the same area today would hardly see any significant change in his eye: people as well as working things. And yet a precipitous change has taken place. It may perhaps be said of the whole national wealth today that it is a possession of the nation; but now no one sees any more what the relationship of ownership is between individual people and individual things. The completely new, which goes much deeper than anything that Marx has ever observed, is the intellectual detachment of the possession of the object. Since the French Revolution began, people and things began to penetrate the security in the form of stocks, shares, mortgage deeds and banknotes. The ownership relationship becomes invisible, and in the course of the nineteenth century something emerged that had never been known before: the appearance of mobile ownership, independent of the place and of the things, only "created" in objects, with the possibility of change at any time of investment, only by the amount, not the kind of fortune. Today, as in the past, a factory can be in the country and work, and yet nobody knows who it belongs to. The property is detached in the form of a few thousand pieces of paper and is liable, which can move in the course of a few hours from one hand to the other, from one country to another, and since the introduction of the telephone service even

with spoken replacement of the property of the visible instrument of value which allows the former to move in a few minutes to foreign parts of the earth, so that they can now shift invisibly and intangibly across the earth, while the factory continues to work independently and unknowingly. From this, a fact has developed which is today not only economic, but long had been politically dominant for a long time.

In Germany, as in all economically advanced countries, we already have more movable than immovable assets. Of national possessions, as far as we are concerned, no doubt more than half are in the hands of men who neither work on, nor even know the objects of which they are currently in possession. They merely "have" them in the form of papers, in order to gain advantages by changing the business of this possession quite independently of the productive work bound to the object. National goods, insofar as they are in things within the borders, and national goods, as far as the sum of the nation's members possess, have thus become two very different quantities. The first is smaller in England, but larger in Germany than the second. How much of German industry belongs to Germany, nobody knows. This changes from one trading day to the next. It is therefore no longer what Marx describes, because of the need to obtain a theoretical basis for the class struggle, that there is a natural opposition between employers and workers; what exists much more today between the men who visibly perform productive labour, whether as leaders, contractors, technicians or workmen, and the much smaller changing number of unknowns who are neither this nor that, but who work, even though they do not know anything about the nature of this work. This replacement of the property of the factory undermines and poisons the actually productive work of today's nations, which is attached to the land of the homeland, to fields, mines, and industrial sites. As long as every work belongs to someone who takes care of it, one can speak of national work. But a movable fortune that can be transferred by telegram from Berlin to New York in an instant is no longer national. It has come off the ground, it is hovering in the air, it's an incredible size. And when progress in this direction reaches the end, so that even in the great economic areas the last portions of the national wealth are released from things, then a form of economy has been reached which quickly consumes even the strongest people. Today, the vast majority of

Germans, English and Americans work, from entrepreneurs to casual labourers, to people who do not know any attachment and who replace each other unnoticed. The inventor and entrepreneur also uses his life work for the unknown, and so a small number of people across the earth can play with the individual national assets and thus the fate of the nations themselves.

The movable assets which stand behind the banks, corporations and individual works have, to an extent of which the public has no suspicion, brought political institutions, parties, governments, the press and public opinion under their influence. In all countries with developed industry, plantation economy or broad trade, they almost dictate the laws that somehow refer to profits and dividends. Under the slogan “Burden on the strong shoulders”, they have made popular a tax policy which, by virtue of their methods, burdens the immovable, that is to say, visible and tangible assets for the benefit of the movable, undetectable; they are pushing the economic legislation unknowingly in one direction, more and more parts of the fixed national wealth are released from visible things and brought into flux as an international fortune, even if only in the form of loans, and then at the expense of the work at the place, to escape the burdens and obligations. It could one day come to the point where all the people work, without knowing who and for what.

This contrast of ownership and possession in the bourgeois and the stock exchange sense goes much deeper than the popular slogan of the past generations about capitalists and proletarians. Germany, like other countries, has a high-bred class, which for generations has acquired something through education, position, spiritual and life-culture, which cannot be interpreted materialistically; an inner rank, a height and subtlety of intellectual and practical activity, a tradition of ability, to comprehend and to aim, on which the whole mental, moral, social, political and, last but not least, economic support of the nation was based. This layer exists only on the premise that enough of the national wealth and its earned income is in their hands to continue this education and tradition and ensure it for the future. If this stratum is undermined and the old families destroyed, then a modern people has lost the best; something that cannot be replaced at all, the natural centre of gravity of its historical trajectory, the born leaders of the whole life, and

preservers of evolved, unlearnable, slowly developed instincts and qualities. This danger is as great in England as it is in Germany.

The taxation and inheritance taxes introduced in 1908 by the left-wing radical Lloyd George, especially the crushing taxes on immovable property, have already reached in England a large part of the old families, for whom the study of politics has a noble tradition. They are forced by the collapse of their property to abandon this tradition.[5] But that does not make this heartland of an always endangered world empire, as a socialist would express himself, freed from his exploiters and *junkers*, but poorer among the strata whose inherited abilities guaranteed success in major politics for centuries.[6] If this leader stratum disappears altogether, then the golden age of the dilettantes and job hunters breaks, without which the financial assets cannot be well expressed, and without which no modern large state governs, let alone reaches larger goals. Impoverishment and the elimination of the historically leading cultural stratum is the tremendous danger of all ancient civilised peoples, and is the burning danger also for the Germany of today.

Those here who want to fulfil the fate of Germany, without utopias and fantasies, with the most accurate, sober knowledge of economic contexts and a great experience in them to save what our prosperity has built since 1870, since we became a world people, for us to build up the leadership foundations of the people, the class that is accustomed to working diligently, modestly, honestly, which by its organisational ability, its ingenuity, its disciplined thinking will by so doing form the conditions necessary for a government with large demands and aims.

As a third and most important thing, I ask you to finally consider seriously and coolly what you should call the art of governing. The term has been lost to us and not just to us. We speak of popular law, popular representation, and the will of the people, and in the noise of modern party gossip we have completely forgotten that leadership is not a claim to privileges, but the exercise of very difficult and rare abilities. These skills must be there, innate or acquired by long self-cultivation, otherwise rights become crimes.[7] The fact that a state is in good shape in the ever-increasing struggle for its world standing, for its existence, and not whether it has a constitution, determines its future. The eighteenth-century state was really or seemingly absolutely governed by princes and their

neighbours, following unwritten methods that over many decades had developed into a high, spiritualised art that today still represents everything that is called diplomacy. The principle: “All for, nothing by the people” then opposes the revolution of 1789[8] with its word: the sovereignty of the people. Although the *Girondists* tragically misinterpreted this, the leading authorities did not have to carry out the real or alleged “will of the people”; they only needed to fill the state with the people’s spokesmen, whether they understood something of political management or not.[9] In place of the council of state appointed by princes, which had a high level even in the worst cases, came elected bodies; the freedom of the princes gave way to the freedom of the people - a great thought that cast its inspiring shadow throughout the following century. This century was destined to realise the ideal, and today’s parliamentarianism reveals how the idea existed before reality. From groups of honest masses in American log cabins, in French salons, at German beer tables that lived for an ideal and died under certain circumstances,[10] developed groups of professional politicians and job hunters, self-proclaimed popular leaders. Parties were at first enthusiastic units of thinking and willing. Today around the world, they are unions of a few thousand people with a swarm of paid party officials who do not represent the opinion of the people, but the direction of their personal interests. The freedom of the people, for whom the fathers shed their blood, has become an oppressive clique. The princely caprice, craving for pleasure and folly, however bad it occasionally may have been, has been replaced by worse, and a new storming of the Bastille would long ago have overthrown these politicians had they not fulfilled public opinion, with popular slogans, controlling the mood of the great masses in their electorates, and ensuring the continuation their lives and profits, from the bribing of French parliamentarians to the cars and stock packages given to the representatives of the German proletarians, and the supervisory boards of German philistines in the bourgeois parties.[11]

A growing disenchantment and deep yearning is today going through the peoples of the world to be freed from this pressure of selfish and dirty interests, from these cabals, despite the gambling of general elections and a free press - which is silent on whom they really serve - to inculcate more ruthlessly than any prince ever dared to do in the age of enlightened despotism, a longing to see

instead of these cabals a personality that does not want to become rich, but wants to govern, out of a sense of superior ability, who, according to the words of Frederick the Great, at last desired again to be a servant of the state, not its beneficiary, and not the director of a party.

This is the end of democracy, not its fall, but its irrevocable inner disintegration, which in the future will allow its forms to become more carefree the less they mean. That would not have been understood before the war, but today it penetrates into the mind, wherever you look, in Europe as in America, where the farmers' movement basically wants the same as Italian fascism. The best Germans, and not the Germans alone, are waiting to see a man, in whose hands one may put the fate of the country, with the authority to reject anyone who seeks to curtail this power in the interest of individual groups. The 18th century was that of princely freedom; the 19th century brought the freedom of peoples - in the beginning as the dawn of an ideal, in the end what must be said relentlessly to be a mockery of this ideal. The 20th century will substitute, in the place of what has become of this freedom, the freedom of the great personality, the freedom which Bismarck sought in vain to wrest from Parliament, which found Rhodes only in South Africa; instead of the parties, the following of individuals,[12] instead of governing as law, which is lost in filth and folly, governing as art, as task, as mission.

These are the pictures the world shows after the war to those who have learned to see the facts. They are still in the fog of obsolete orders. Tomorrow they will be confirmed by the appointed bearers of a novel world politics, carriers of whose being or non-being the fate of entire continents may depend.

Here we stand at the turn of two ages, disarmed, dishonoured, abysses, with a broken tradition, deceived by a rogue revolution for everything the fate and life of great statesmen had given us, under the laughter of those who want to feed foreign countries on the fruits of this revolution.[13] What was built up from 30 years of Bismarckian world politics has been destroyed. The high form of our state life, developed since Friedrich Wilhelm I, has been destroyed. The fruits of a traditional diligence of the nation are destroyed. We need more than any other people to start all over again, and only strength and unrestrained Will can give us the

guarantee that this will happen.

Here is the task of the growing generation: To work out a new style of political will and action from the new conditions of the 20th century, to bring to light new forms, methods and ideas which, like the ideas of the French Revolution and the customs of the English House of Commons, serve as models from one country to another, propagated until the history of the next time progresses into forms whose starting point will one day be found in Germany.[14] Huge perspectives open up here, hammered out under the impressions of the World War and the Revolution. The task will be taken up by youth who are starving to intervene creatively in the future, to regard the future as a task, as your field. Will you be up to this situation? Have you understood what all this involves? I understand your longing, but do you know the historical duties imposed on you by the fact that you are young today, that you become men, especially when the decision is made on Germany's resurgence?

Certainly, we have learned many things that were unknown to us throughout the 19th century. We have learned a kind of independent, almost American action and resolution that was alien to us before the war, where everyone was waiting for what was wanted. We have forgotten a good deal of sentimentality, the old-woman idealism of the German *Michel*, who, under the auspices of their enemies, found their good qualities and sought to understand their reasons without prejudice. We discovered late, but hopefully not too late, a piece of national pride in us. The service attitude that Bebel[15] once attributed to the majority of Germans, has withdrawn into party ranks, whose five-year foreign policy would make a battered dog ashamed. And we have finally learned something that I want to call to you: the ability to hate. He who cannot hate is not a man, and history is made by men.

Their decisions are tough and cruel, and those who believe they can avoid them with understanding and reconciliation are not made for politics. That we Germans can finally hate is one of the few results of this period that could guarantee our future. But that alone cannot save Germany.

National politics has been understood in Germany since the war as a kind of intoxication. The youth were enthusiastic in masses of flags and badges, in music and parades, in theatrical vows and

amateurish calls and theories. Undoubtedly, the feelings will be satisfied, but politics is something else. Successful policies have never been made with the heart alone. All the great successes of statesmanlike art and clever popular instincts were the result of cool contemplation, long silence and waiting, hard self-control and, above all, a fundamental renunciation of intoxication and and spectacles.[16] Consider how unspeakably lonely Bismarck was throughout his life, only because in the midst of nineteenth-century Germany alone he pursued a far-reaching, taciturn and cool policy of fact. “I recognised him as a political businessman, far superior to anything one can think of in this regard. He only seems to reckon with what is to focus only on practical solutions, indifferent to anything that does not lead to a useful purpose,” Jules Favre said of him in September 1870. “There are times when one must govern liberally and times when dictatorial rule is required and everything must change,” Bismarck himself said in the Reichstag in 1881. When, in his old age, every child saw the fruits of his labour, he was hailed in a thousand Bismarckian summers, but where was the youth of our colleges in all those years, when he was quite alone in struggling to build Germany? If his king and emperor had not supported him, and provided him with all his influence over the affairs of state against an overwhelming number of enemies, he would have failed at the very beginning, and he would still be called a fool and a criminal today, as he was for years by all the parties. The student youth did not understand him then in the midst of their patriotism better than anyone else. And one must also, especially today, take a critical look at the kind of enthusiasm in 1813.[17] We are used to looking at this time of great passion as well as on the foundation of Germany’s later greatness. But as hard as it is, it must be said: What has the political intoxication of these years given us? The defeat of the French, of course, but it was secured by the destruction of the great army and the Spanish uprising anyway. It is not blind enthusiasm with which nations and states are created or saved, neither today nor in Germanic primeval forests. What did the Schill officers sacrifice for?[18] For England! What did our youth suffer during the Wars of Liberation? For England! And what does the folk movement of today work for, blind as it is in its actions and thinking? For France. Only the incorruptible eye of Goethe at that time saw the swarming aimlessness of liberty and I advise you to read over and over again his shattering conversation with Luden of

November 1813.[19] College youth began to debate tactical issues of world politics and world economy - this youth was nothing but a stone in the game of great, especially English diplomacy. It was let loose when needed, and abandoned when it had served its purpose for foreign powers. No will, no number, but only mental and tactical superiority protects against that. We did not have a truly national diplomat, and if we had had him, he would not have understood the national movement and failed.

If you do not want the national enthusiasm of these years to be only a tool in the hands of foreign diplomacy and its inner German following, then you must educate yourself to something other than a policy of unbridled, romantic, world-blind passions. It is not that one makes noise against this or that power, but that one is superior in political skill that has significance. When I go through the streets of German cities today and see what sort of meetings and parades take place, what kind of slogans are attached to the houses, what kind of badges are worn, what is sung or shouted, what kind of childlike theories are substituted for economic facts, I despair of despairing. I wonder again and again which hostile power will exploit and then reveal this blind, haphazard enthusiasm, despising all facts of the world situation. Compared with all that the growing generation has been wanting to talk, think and do for five years, the old saying from the dark years of the German past is constantly coming to my lips: “Woe to the land whose king is a child !”

We must, as hard as we can, choose to pursue politics as politics, as we have always understood, as a long, hard, lonely, folk art, and not as intoxication or military spectacle. Most of you have carried weapons. I remind you that politics is nothing but an art of fencing with intellectual weapons. You know what exercise, skill and cold-bloodedness mean here. You know that the secret of victory lies in the surprise of the opponent. If you wanted to use the methods of your political activity in the duel or on the battlefield, swinging the weapon in the air in front of the enemy’s eye, proclaiming the attack in public and preparing it, the first blow would be the last. At any rate, passion does not determine success; passions make you dependent. And too often our national movement, as it is today within the German party struggle, offers the image of a bull in the arena, blind, angry, inaccessible to any understanding of the situation. We must finally learn that great politics are just as little

exhausted in organising and agitating, in programmes and outbursts of emotion as on the other hand in the mere solution of economic problems. A smart businessman is not yet a politician - although politics is the management of a state - but drummers and whistlers are certainly not generals.[20]

Modern politics requires an extraordinary amount of practice and knowledge, and I miss in young people, who today regard politics as their task and mission, not only the earnest will to educate oneself for greater tasks, but also the knowledge of the facts, powers and directions of today's world politics to the necessary extent appropriate. Once again: It does not depend on the will, but on the skills, and skill requires the mastery of the area on which it is to operate. It is a fatal error, which is produced by daily reading of newspapers, and much more by the masses of flat and silly party slogans, to believe that everyone can understand and do politics, if only he has the right "disposition." The motto of the nineteenth century: "Politics to the people" has brought up masses and babblers, but has robbed the statesmen of their entourage. Most of them have used most of their nerve power not on their work, but on maintaining a minimum of freedom of movement.

There is also a tremendous, purely German danger. Since 1918 we have lost all influence beyond our borders. I do not mention that we did not even remain masters within these limits. We Germans have entered the ranks of world peoples for barely fifty years and are far from being accustomed to taking the political view and thinking appropriate to this position as a matter of course, having once again become provincialists, more so than any other people. At first this affects the extent of our foreign policy, which has become a mere border policy and in many cases not even that. But moreover, our desolate past, with its stupid petty nationality, its philistine horizon, its miserable bickering from one little locality to the other, again threatens to narrow the scope of the national movement to the point of hopelessness. Particularism is not the only expression of inherited provincialism, but also the usual treatment of German questions today, as if Germany were alone in the world. Since we lost our colonies, a fatality for the political horizons of our people, little is known about what's going on in East Asia, Central America, and South Africa, and many believe that they do not need to know. The political view has been limited to Central Europe and

often enough to a small district of it. A limited national arrogance has grown up, which considers it beneath its dignity to observe the conditions of foreign countries in solving domestic problems, and to take seriously the historical and economic development of the world around us. What does not lie or seem to lie in the direction of one's own ideology is treated with mockery or disrespect or misunderstood as planned. One does not bother to study the internal conditions of England or America or, for instance, the development of the Pacific Ocean situation. One does not waste a moment on studying global economic problems such as supplying raw materials or overcoming sales crises, and prefers to be charmed by some ridiculous, desk-based theory of a moneyless economy.

But at least Fascism knew how to communicate in good time with the relevant powers of the economy, because it was important for success and not for programs and parades. Otherwise, it would soon fail.[21] Germany, with its sixty million inhabitants, is in the middle of a world of 1500 million. It has no natural border. It cannot do without trade, raw materials or food imports. With the abandonment of a global political horizon, with the renunciation of contact with world political factors, which presupposes an equal altitude of experience, reflection and tactics, dwindle all the prospects of the national movement, without doubt. Under such circumstances the fate of Germany as a colony of the Western powers will be sealed. Every day I hear conversations that startle me, naïve proposals for fundamental economic reforms by young people who have never seen a steel mill and never read a treatise on modern credit; ideas about constitutional reforms without the slightest idea of how a ministry needs to be set up today to work, and what is part of its business. Nobody studies the practice of great statesmen such as Bismarck, Gladstone, [Joseph] Chamberlain and, in the name of God, Poincaré; their way of achieving inconspicuous successes in the tough little work of the day, the result of which, however, is an epoch in the fate of their country. We have combat targets whose recognition does not exceed a few thousand square kilometers.

But we need a constant reflection of our youth and not just a reflection, but a serious and thorough working through of the great conditions of the present world economy and world politics, by means of data and facts. We cannot solve a German question,

whichever it may be, if we do not know exactly how it relates immediately to the political combinations in England, Russia, and America, and that feeling should go beyond the knowledge of practical relations. This on our part presupposes persons of corresponding position and experience who have so far spurned the national movement. Our rise depends on our ability to adapt to political methods abroad, as is the case in the field of technology and economic organisation, and not that we ignore these methods. And the same applies to the international powers within Germany, represented by the slogans Marxism and Stock Exchange. You can refute their views, but you cannot do away with them. Whether someone is right or wrong, does not matter much in history. Whether one is practically superior to the opponent or not, decides on success.

And with that I come to the conclusion that we Germans are getting used to the idea that politics is not a way of expressing feelings and opinions, but of high art, because our past has given us no reason to experience it. But if we do not learn that now, I am afraid that the future will no longer give us any reason. It is the sacred duty of the younger generation to educate themselves for politics. Since we are not in the fortunate position of England, sending young people early and in practical positions to all continents, the study of these things is left to us only by historical material, but this should be done with double the seriousness. I advise the youth, to abandon all enthusiastic programs and party scripts, and to study individually or together the diplomatic records of the last decades, such as those published in German archives or in English Blue Books, to compare the writings on purposes, means, and successes, to form a judgment and thus to penetrate the practise of modern statesmanship; the speeches and letters of great politicians, the memoranda of the best connoisseurs of today's global economy such as Keynes or Helfferich[22] carefully go through to first form an opinion on the situation, the methods, the importance of the acting personalities. Even for the least there is still a task. There are virtues for guides and virtues for guided ones. One of the last ones is that one understands the nature and goals of real politics - otherwise one trots behind fools and the born leaders perish alone. To educate oneself for service to great leaders, in proud renunciation, to impersonal sacrifice, that is also a German virtue. And suppose that in the difficult times ahead in Germany

strong men come to the fore, leaders to whom we may entrust our fate, they must have those they can rely on. They need a generation that forms a devoted following who, through a long and serious political self-education, has been able to grasp what is necessary and what is not. This self-education for future tasks is what I see as the political duty of youth. With this alone you can mentally transcend the frontier, which today cuts Germany off from the world as a result of the Versailles Treaty. Our future is not based on what is created by new forms within our borders, but on what is achieved outside of borders as a result of these forms.

---

1 French proto-Fascist, monarchist organisation whose ideological mentor was the literary figure Charles Maurras. The organisation was excessively anti-German.

2 Spengler is again prescient in stating that future wars would be fought by armies under ideological banners. World War II was fought in the name of "democracy," and so are the countless wars since that time to own day, often in the name of "human rights," and again of "democracy," obscuring the raw struggle for power behind alleged ideals.

3 After a short time of ruling Mongolia (1920-1921).

4 Baron von Unger-Sternberg, a Czarist officer and landowner whose family had been murdered by the Bolsheviks, established the last anti-Bolshevik redoubt in Mongolia during the Russian Civil War. The Mongols revered him as the reincarnation of their Warrior God. A mystic and military Buddhist, he envisaged a Eurasian empire extending across the entirety of Asia and including Russia, which would defeat Bolshevism as well as the decadent West.

5 The landed aristocracy and gentry were destroyed by the Whigs representing the type of anonymous, rootless capitalism that Spengler has been describing. Driven from their land, their centuries' old family estates became part of the National Trust. How was this any different in spirit, other than by a more subtlety of methods, than the confiscations enforced in Bolshevik Russia? The old families were pushed into speculative economics that had been anathema to them, or married into the new money of American heiresses.

6 Marxists seldom address the issue of the financial speculation behind modern capitalism. Marx despised most of all as "reactionists" (*Communist Manifesto*) those who sought unity among all productive classes against the financial speculators, while championing what is today called "globalisation" as part of the revolutionary dialectic. His correspondence with Engels displays more animosity towards local tradesmen and shop-keepers expecting payment for the bills than towards speculators.

7 Spengler defends the role of traditional aristocracy, cultivated for leadership and duty over generations, in contrast to the democratic herd and party politics which, as Spengler often stated, stands as a façade behind which plutocracy operates. "Rights" without the cultivation of duty and discipline by those who have them, do indeed become crimes, recent examples being the French "Reign of

Terror" and the "Red Terror" in Russia, both undertaken in the name of equality.

8 French Revolution, with its democratic/proto-bolshevist/Masonic catch-cry: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."

9 The dictatorship of the Jacobin regime in France in the name of "the people," like the cynically named "dictatorship of the proletariat" in Bolshevik Russia. The *Girondists* were a more moderate faction in the French Assembly during the Revolution, who were purged and exterminated in 1793 by their former Jacobin comrades, which was the beginning of the "Reign of Terror."

10 The revolutionary idealists of various lands.

11 However corrupt elements of the old ruling classes might have occasionally been, states Spengler, nothing compares with the bribery and corruption of the parliamentary deputies, whether of the bourgeoisie liberal or "socialist" parties.

12 This era did indeed become one of great leader types, even in the democracies, where those such as Roosevelt assumed the role, while genuinely great personalities such as Senator Huey Long started building mass movements. Roosevelt's "New Deal" Administration took on aspects of Italian Fascism, and even German National Socialism (the "Strength Through Joy" programme was studied with particular interest by the U.S. embassy in Berlin, at the request of Roosevelt), in an effort to emulate the successes of those regimes in overcoming the Depression.

13 An allusion to the crippling reparations demanded from Germany after World War I.

14 This shows that while Spengler was addressing Germany, he was looking beyond German horizons to the destiny of the entirety of Western Civilisation, regarding Germany, despite the defeat, as still possessing the most youthful vigour of any other people to lead the Western resurgence.

15 August Bebel, German socialist.

16 One can see with such an outlook that Spengler was dubious as to whether the Hitlerites with the demagoguery, parades and street fights possessed the necessary course for Germany.

17 A German confederation fought to liberate the German states from Napoleon.

18 Ferdinand von Schill led an army revolt against French occupation, for which he and other officers were executed.

19 Goethe wrote in 1813 to the historian Luden on the flaws of the German people as a mass: "It makes me most miserable to think of the German people. They are valuable as individuals, but hopeless as a whole."

20 During this time the Nationalist Right had various political and affiliated paramilitary formations, and performed displays of military training and marching. However, the Left also had its military formations, including the Social Democrats and the Communists. This was a phenomenon occurring across Europe in the aftermath of the Great War, when politics became militarised. Spengler was calling for sober political thinking; statesmanship, not rabble-rousing.

21 An allusion to the statesmanship of Mussolini that was widely acknowledged even among the democracies.

22 Karl Hellferich was Minister of Finance and of the Interior during the Great War. After the war he was a critic of the Weimar regime, becoming an academic, a journalist, a diplomat and serving in the Colonial Office. He was leader of the *Deutsche-Nationalen*, and a member of the Reichstag for the German National People's Party.

Building of the New German Reich

(1924)

1. The Swamp

In the first section Spengler outlines the need for a strong State executive drawn from the most talented elements of the nation, above party and vested interests, with the ultimate moral authority returning to a restored monarchy. He traces the democratic contagion of Europe to the French Revolution and other sources, but states that Britain under parliamentarianism was nonetheless able to minimise the damage of a parliamentary system due to not only its Monarchy, but also due to a civil service that educated and selected for ability, and hence had an administrative continuity above party politics.

- § -

When a tremendous misfortune falls upon a man, it becomes clear how much strength and good was in him. When fate crushes a people, it reveals its inner greatness or smallness. Only the utmost danger unmistakably shows the historical rank of a nation.

In the biggest of all wars, military luck was denied us. Thanks to our energy, labour and organisational gifts, we had experienced an economic ascent that was granted to few peoples, and was not even possible for most. We fought and tolerated for four years, as perhaps no nation before, but the defeat suddenly revealed a wretchedness unprecedented in world history. Glowing shame of who we were and what we are overcomes us when we meet strangers.

But countless people have already forgotten that it could be different and that it was different.

Have we finally reached what our national character really is? Boastful in luck, undignified in misfortune, the primitive against the

weaker, creeping against the strong, dirty in the pursuit of advantages, unreliable, petty, without moral force, without genuine faith in anything, without a past, without future – is this what we really are?

Just because it is not so, because we can and will finally draw the dividing line between the German people and the instigators and beneficiaries of the collapse, we dare to claim a greater future. But here and now it is a matter of ruthlessly seeking the ulcer on the German body in order to heal a long, creeping illness.

It was not “Marxism” but a party, not “liberalism,” but a party, not “ultramontanism,”[1] but a party; it was not worldviews, but cooperatives and groups with an organised appendage and a purposeful method, which criticised, paralyzed, and subdued the Reich, rendered the war hopeless after a pause of compulsory collective enthusiasm, as they had previously held down all armaments, at last to support the ship of state in the belief that it would make way for a government ideal according to their tastes - not for Germany but for a party.[2]

Looking back today on the slowly creeping development of this calamity, it seems to me to be the fateful turning point in 1877, when Bismarck sought to bring Bennigsen into a ministry.[3] For a moment the author of the Reich thought of imposing on the parties the co-responsibility for the administration and management of the vastly rising country and the heavy tasks of its foreign policy. These parties were taken for granted - it was the last golden age of Western European parliamentarism. In England, the Conservatives had their most successful ministry under Disraeli.

But this Reich and its founder, Bismarck, always aware of foreign policy matters, were strongly identified with one another, with a much admired, exemplary administration, a sincere, diligent, brilliantly trained civil service and a victorious army. These were the forces with which they were able to solve the most difficult tasks, and they did not grasp the need to involve the advancing party system, which up to that moment was an outside body, independent of the state and against it. But sharing responsibility with the parties did not happen in 1877 and since then parliamentarians have been excluded from any responsible state work. However, neither did the state understand the need for

political education. The need for authority was founded in the unfavourable Central European situation and became fatal. The state lacked the understanding, judgment and internal cooperation of the people, because the state was sure of its excellence of execution of all measures. And as little as the German Reich understood how to educate the people - for the Reich - the schools remained humanistic, the teachers diligent and patriotic, but unworldly and politically unsuspecting, and teaching about the Battle of Marathon seemed to them always more important than the Berlin Congress. Therefore there were no efforts to educate parties and press, which were seen only as obstacles of Authority, without being able to discover the incalculable possibilities that every other country has long since fully exploited. If the government had cautiously begun at that time to entrust some gifted Party people with the leadership of a ministry, and the political leader of a large paper with a diplomatic mission, it would be a very different, statesmanlike, practical action. If ambition came up the party political leader would be very cautious in his criticism, because he could be better situated to change matters tomorrow. But without co-responsibility, Parliament became obsessed with the gift of power without authority to use it, and unrestrained, corrosive criticism against the state was the only remaining activity, with its barren, limited, petty-bourgeois, conceit, which has since worsened. Between the mighty achievements of the state and a people that neither saw nor appreciated it at its best, and therefore only scolded the state for the "burdens" it imposed, an increasingly lower stratum at the top of party organisations encamped itself at beer tables around the country. Without a sense of responsibility, because they had not been given any, the party leaders negotiated with the state their approval of laws on a case-by-case basis, dealing with the state as with a foreign and hostile power, and acting not much differently than a gang of robbers negotiating with travellers about a ransom. The easiest way for the state to gain support from one party was to play it off against the jealousy of another party: that was the inner-political, poisonous, stultifying style that necessarily arose from not allowing parties to share responsibility in the affairs of state.

These parties, as in England, were swarms of parasites on the body of the Reich, and the people, the German *Michel*, politically left without any training, duelling between ministers and party

leaders. Thus, this class of party politicians received a legacy of negation, which yielded an increasingly inferior offspring. This party opposition to the state poisoned the working class in socialism by saying that class struggle was more important than big politics; in liberalism the middle class with the view that economic policy is more important; in the centre the Catholics[4] who granted the state the means of great politics, only if it satisfied party interests.

Napoleon's secret was that a Marshal's Staff was in the knapsack of every soldier; thus anyone with ability might attain power. Since the career of the politician - and the political newspaper head - had become a dead-end, so gathered the complainers, drunkards and lawless; everything that grows without talent in the vicinity of German beer. Personalities did not enter politics; they disappeared into industry or went abroad. Politics withered for lack of the gifted, for, as a counter effect, this party activity made the government treat all diplomatic matters with emphasis as an internal administrative task and therefore more schematically than tactically. The state worked alone and this work was considered almost as the private matter of its members. And as a result, as schools, parties, and the press consistently failed, there was no longer any political enlightenment at this time of approaching danger. Before the war the German people did not know their terribly endangered and perhaps already hopeless situation; they did not suspect it during the war, and they are still far from understanding today; for these three political educators of modern peoples (schools, parties, press) in contrast to all other countries, have sunk even lower since then, while the parties are advancing.

What is today called nationalism is nothing but the consciousness of the leading strata of all peoples for the immense dangers of the world situation, since the war has broken up all relations. There is a possibility that entire states and peoples will disappear in the coming changes, as was already the case with the Habsburg Empire and the Russian upper classes. The responsible circles of all peoples are on the alert - only the fools, cowards and criminals who are in our place believe or pretend that the renunciation of world politics protects them from their consequences.

Even after 1914, these parties maintained the liberal stand-alone estimation of economic policy and the socialist class struggle. Since the Bethmann-Hollweg government, weak and incomprehensible as

it was, resembling entirely the French of 1789, the party clique in its already very questionable composition, rather than directing him, which would have been easy for a minister of English training, flattered him. Some wanted to see this powerful state weak; others did not want it at all. “Germany should, this is our firm will, forever eliminate its military, without having brought them home victorious for the last time,” was the secret objective of the opposition. When the politically uneducated and deceived mass began to feel the duration of the war with fear and resentment, they set to work. The fall of the State in the minor person of Bethmann was the first to undermine the military.

And here it was revealed what kind of material the government had bred in the parties. While the enemy was exposed to the whole weakness of the situation, by trepidation or ideological peace talk in parliament and the press, the filling of the high offices and the war-societies, often founded for this purpose, began with party friends and confidants, who were liberated from front-line service or provided with lucrative contracts; foreign policy becomes a no less rewarding venture for individuals. There increased dubious elements who wanted to have political influence and even economically prosper from the war.[5]

The people broke down spiritually, the state disintegrated from above, the army lost its moral support, which first became alarmingly apparent on August 8, 1918, at Cambrai. Over the ruins of the German world power, over two million corpses of heroes had fallen in vain. The people of Weimar are now smiling. The dictatorship of the party leaders, the same community of limited and dirty interests which had undermined our position since 1917 and committed every kind of betrayal, from the overthrow of capable people. They were in no way different from the Bolsheviks in Moscow. After the Coalition heroes had fled the collapse, they reappeared with sudden zeal when they saw the Spartacists alone above the prey. The scramble for the share of booty arose in both the grand houses and in the pubs of Weimar. The German Republic is not a state form, but a company. Their statutes do not speak of the people, but of parties; not of power, of honour and greatness, but of parties. We no longer have a fatherland, but parties; no rights, but parties; no goal, no future, but the interests of parties. And these parties-once more: not peoples, but profit-making

companies with a paid bureaucracy that behaved like American parties, like a junk shop or department store, they decided to hand over to the enemy everything he wished, claiming the courage to progress while only to pursue their own goals. They had made the Weimar Constitution for themselves and their followers, not for the nation, and they began a shameful economy, with all that was to be taken advantage of, from the truce to the capitulation of the State, with the rubble of the state, with the remnants of our prosperity, with our Honour, our soul, our willpower. From Weimar, the best-known heroes of this play on the day were signing at Versailles, and it was not much later that leaders of the proletariat were drunk with nude dancers in a Berlin mansion, while workers' deputations waited outside the door. This is not an incident but a symbol. Such is German parliamentarianism. For five years no deed, no decision, no thought, not even an attitude, but now these proletarians were landowners and rich sons-in-law. It is perfectly true that democracy across the world follows these paths.

The political influence of the economic leaders (except for eastern agriculture) was by far overestimated before the war. Even in very serious situations their role was advisory in nature, and often not even that. In the end, the jealous influence of the high administration on political decisions was always decisive. Above all, large-scale industry possessed neither political horizon nor energy nor consistency, much in contrast to the English, which had always lived in constant contact and in accordance with high politics as a result of an ancient tradition. After the collapse, these economic circles emerged as powers, not by their own decision, but because political power was suddenly gone; however they have become politically neither active nor far-sighted. The non-productive economy, from high finance to the fictitious industry in which trading perhaps merely in currency speculation, was only obscured by participation in industry, understood very soon the advantages of the new situation. Since politics became a business, business has become political. And while in France, the focus of economic influence on big policy shifted significantly from pure high finance to heavy industry, in Germany it went from East German agriculture to the financial world.[6] These circles came into close connection with the part of the ruling party that was able to follow their reflections, and they understood perfectly well, through their agents in the parties and the democratic press, to cover this

community of interest with the legend implanted in public opinion on the contrary, that was industry and agriculture that constantly pressured the government. The consequences became more serious throughout economic and fiscal policy; the income of the immovable part of the German national wealth was slowly sacrificed in order to secure the continuance of the proceeds from the movable and non-state-bound assets.

Revolutionary parliaments are of little practical value: much petty-bourgeois sentimentality, little eye for facts and no experience at all. Minister Roland said in 1791 of the new legislature in Paris: “What most surprises me is the general mediocrity. It transcends everything that imagination can imagine.” The German parliamentary material was less than mediocre even before the war, as it had no real purpose, but it was honest despite all its lack of judgment. Now the tasks were there, but they consisted, as is intrinsic to the innermost nature of the collapse, in private advantages, from the parliamentarian’s possession of a free train ticket, up to the ministerial chair, and these prospects attracted quite different spirits. “Politics is the continuation of private business by other means” should stand as a motto over this democracy of the very latest character.

As the world went about saving, debasing debt, rebuilding the economy, pushing back the Marxist fashions of the last years of the war, which was nothing but an attempt to assassinate entire peoples and states, the exploitation of Germany by the union of its self-paying liberators began. Thousands of posts were created, down to the villages, ministries founded, committees appointed; the forced economy is maintained, and the nationalisation of private companies created new jobs.

If the surpluses of these enterprises immediately became deficits, the principle was upheld, and this principle was called supply. Ministers’ employees blossomed by the hundreds in Republican Germany, and behind the ministerial dance one saw the open mouths and greedy eyes of a thousand party and trade union secretaries, party journalists, cousins, business friends for which ever new committees had to be formed and new regulations had to be carried out. In 1922, a union official received one of the highest administrative offices in Prussia on the grounds that he was the last of his age group who had not yet been commissioned. Foreign

policy was increasingly perceived as a disturbance of this praiseworthy enterprise, and under the name of the policy of fulfilment the diminishing of Germany had support from a French press thriving in Germany, and from time to time frightened by French-funded communism.

The ministerial seats were given as loot in the ever-changing coalitions, regardless of suitability or willingness to work. The great offices disintegrated, without expert guidance, left to themselves, overcrowded, contaminated by party creatures. The once famous administration barely survived day by day. The laws, which were always exemplary under the old government, were brought in as raw material to be talked about, while the realisation of their usefulness was left to the future for implementing regulations.

All this was undertaken by the coalition of 1917 alone. But then came a moment for whose appreciation a starving people lacked humour. For that year, the German People's Party was founded[7] and drooled while it watched. Judas had to share with the other apostles in the thirty pieces of silver. And from then on, each was given a few ministerial seats. To the understanding between the instigators and the beneficiaries of the collapse, up to the glorious explanation, which this party one day in the Reichstag gave: it must represent the opposite view to the socialists. Marxism and monarchy were - what do you say? - without a stock market listing, so as not to burden the new trust. The democratic press was certainly one (and probably vice versa) with the hostile foreign countries, in how it represented any remnants of national pride and rights to the electorate. There was no law from now on that they did not trample; no blame they did not receive smiling. There is no filth, no cowardice, no lie that would not become commonplace. And when the indignation and laughter in the land aroused the fear that one day they would no longer be there, they created the Republican protection law, the law for the protection of this firm, and its acceptance became effortless through the threat of the dissolution of the Reichstag.

Naked misery thronged the streets of German cities. People trudged from shop to shop, ragged, dull, joyless, eyes fixed on nothing but the ever-growing price digits; in front of the milk shops, women formed queues in the cold and rain. The children, as far as they were born and did not die, remained small, pitiful, a

frightening prospect of the future of our race. Crippled officers served as servants in inns, students swept the streets, and people who had become wealthy in hard labour carried bread home from alms. In the Reichstag, however, the deputies continued to eat well.

And when, at last, the deaths by hunger creeping through the cities, the indestructible physical and mental suffering caused a dull rumbling in the time of maddest despair, it was not through shame, not as a remnant of honour, but only fear by these pirates of Parliamentarism, when they suggested some restraint and the display of a sudden sense of responsibility. First, the fear of the domestic consequences of the collapse of the market, then fear for the pension market, which made the tortured people harmless until further notice. But I see in the spokesmen of this system the secret emergence of one last wish, more villainous than all those who have gone before: the wish to finally avoid the consequences of a reconciliation of the people, by transforming Germany into a reparations colony, into a European India – driven by the wish to avoid responsibility for their internal policies by being able to blame outside circumstances.

In the face of this five-year orgy of ineptitude, cowardice, and meanness, one can only look with bitter concern at the National-Right that today prepares to take over of business as the trustee of the future. The National-Right has everything that belongs to a man of honour, a lot of selfless submission, a lot of sacrifice, private cleanliness, loyalty, but it has nothing of statesmanship, and today it is as little prepared for running state affairs as it was when opposing Bismarck in 1872.

It is a grave error of conservative circles, especially in revolutionary times, that honesty, impeccable sentiment and warmth of feeling could outweigh a lack of intelligence. Or, more correctly, it is precisely because of this lack that one does not grasp the tactical superiority of the other side, which always opposes the more intelligent minds with a rooted tradition - or inherited prejudices. But the goal of politics is success. The spectacle not only in Germany, but in all the late and mature cultures of the world is always the same: right “sentiments”, and official and diplomatic experience, but doomed to failure due to lack of intelligence. On both sides, one finally depends on the fortunate circumstance that men of superior instinct and great energy, such as Cromwell or

Napoleon, take matters into their own hands. Only in England are the Conservatives at least equal to the Liberals in intelligence; this is the result of an unparalleled historical and social education in traditional business. Commerce in its spiritual methods is closer to diplomacy than industry and agriculture, with its greater affinity to administration and organisation.

In 1919 I wrote in *Prussianism and Socialism* that, as a result of our unsuccessful revolution, we are undergoing a directorial period before *Thermidor*.[8] This has now lasted for four years, and the danger today for the internal situation is that it is interrupted with inadequate means.[9] This is precisely the directorial period, the second terrible period of the French Revolution, whose details are meaner, more bleak, more terrible than those of the first, because they lack every trace of greatness; had no faith in ideas, aims, institutions, no personality, no deed, not even confidence in the duration of their own rule. It is the salvation not of revolution but of revolutionaries, as Sieyès said in 1795. We see the events as follows: 1789 the Bastille is stormed, then the regicide, the Reign of Terror, Robespierre, then Napoleon. But Robespierre disappeared in the summer of 1794, and Napoleon came in the fall of 1799: in between are five gruesome years, which nobody cares about today, because they offer the historian nothing, no man, no creation, no event - for the campaigns of Napoleon in Italy and Egypt had nothing to do with the situation in France But they were there, and that this was possible is a problem that should occupy us very seriously with regard to our own immediate future. How did this relapse into the time of horror come about? After the execution of Robespierre, there seemed to be no halt in eliminating his system. The Jacobin Club was closed, its followers disappeared everywhere from the public. At the beginning of June, 1795, in Paris daily people expected the proclamation of the monarchy, which was stopped only by the fact that the young prince was dying. It appears the *jeunesse dorée,* determined young people who had had enough of the Jacobins and with fists and sticks, unconcerned about the difficult issues of politics, administration and economy, wanted to usher in the new epoch. Well, the folk in Germany today are the *jeunesse dorée*, born of the same cause, carried by the same spirit. They have the same highly inflammatory enthusiasm, the same zest for action, the same honesty and the same narrowness. Neither the one nor the other suspected anything of the gravity of

statesmanship in a thoroughly devastated country; they looked down contemptuously on cool considerations, and they had little desire to seriously concern themselves with prosaic details of currency, employment, administration, finances, and external relations. It was enough for the Jacobins to feel the sticks on their backs. The brief history of this movement is not yet written, but the lack of understanding was then the same as it is today, where Germany's *jeunesse dorée* wants to build *realpolitik* on racial sentiments[10]. Of course, these widespread feelings are not a source of great politics for governing or saving a country. Every statecraft and every healthy folk instinct takes gifts, where it finds them, the French in Napoleon an Italian, the English Conservatives in Disraeli a Jew, the Russian nobility and clergy in Catherine II a German. And no politically educated people in the world makes assumptions about race, although the Englishmen and Americans in race questions certainly feel more passionate than most Germans. This and the childish economic views and utopias are so desperately German in the most evil sense, so melancholy and provincial, and cut off the *volkisch* movement and thus the tremendous impact force resting in it so completely from everything by talent and experience.[11] It will be said that the volkisch movement at least prepares the ground for a greater future, but *the jeunesse dorée* did not even accomplish that. It made Jacobinism viable again and nothing else. The revolution was finally overcome only by Napoleon.

The world economy has its forms and means as a result of its development, and Germany is forced to work in its framework or not to work at all. In Russia, the attempt to override this fact has cost the lives of thirty million people, with the result that one now seeks a reversal, in order at least to be able to lead the existence of savages. But Russia is self-sufficient. In Germany, which relies on import, export, and credit, the slightest attempt to shake the existing forms of interest on credit, or to challenge the existing financial powers, would lead to a catastrophe. In the economy, which deceive even experts sometimes, much less attention is paid to the "correctness" of views and the merits of new methods than to what the leading economic figures in the world want to use as their method. The better insight of theoreticians does not matter at all, and also in high politics it does not depend on long skulls, but on what is in those skulls.[12]

With the bustle of the *jeunesse dorée,* no one felt secure, and the Jacobins were given unexpected prospects in the 1795 coup d'état of the *Vendémiaire*,[13] due to the sudden fear of Bonaparte. The Jacobins, after all, had political experience and they took advantage of this. All offices down to the consulates abroad and the local government were again filled with their supporters. The 1797 elections, however, deprived the Jacobins of their sense of security, as did the new financial world. The first and most significant measure was the suspension of the investigation against the suppliers of the Jourdan army for embezzlement. The emigrant lists were searched and every returned emigrant was sentenced to death. They were shot in their hundreds; their property fell into the hands of the Jacobins and their friends; the nobility was formally deprived of civil rights. Only now, not in 1793, did they collapse inwardly. Thousands of returned priests were imprisoned, deported or executed. The "terrorist reaction" (Taine) issued a hostage law, according to which for every act against a Jacobin four persons would be killed.

One coup followed the other; and elections brought a hardly believable corruption. At that time The Directorate offered the peace and cession of Ceylon and the Cape to England for a secret payment of £ 2 million: that was the legacy of the *jeunesse dorée*. Are such possibilities that far away from us?

It is not rights or constitutions, not ideals and programmes, not even moral principles or racial attributes, on which the fate of a people depend, but first and foremost on the abilities of the ruling minority. We need to breed such abilities, and we need political forms that will breed them, or we will perish; just as the General Staff of the old army and the Roman Senate bred statesmen. Everything else is incidental. The art of governing is not the first, but the only problem of great politics. Everything else follows from that. This art of governing has made world history. It raised tiny nations to the heights and destroyed great ones. To have a principle under which born leaders come to where they are needed; a political education, which awakens, trains, expels, and suppresses the opposing institutions; forming a tradition that does all this almost unnoticed and perfected - that is the meaning of any constitution in which a people is located, whether it is given by a ruler or decided by an assembly, whether it is in paragraphs or

habits. “People’s rights” are ridiculous, as long as they include the freedom to be corrupted by parties. There is only one popular law: the rights of those who govern. If in the great turn of the 18th to the 19th centuries “princely freedom” had been not been replaced by freedom of the peoples, only then could a meaning lay in the better selection of rulers, whose methods become more successful, their achievements greater. But the decision was made in the last century on the democratic method. The turning point of the twentieth century is marked by the need to overcome European-American democracy, which is no longer necessary for the survival of the great nations, or rather what it has produced as the realisation of its idea: the rule of high finance, and the nepotism of the parties instead of the sovereignty of the nation, where there is dismissal by election, the buying of elections and the purchase of the press. The English House of Commons was the only parliament in the world where there was something to learn, but that is precisely what cannot be imitated. We Germans have been missing a hundred years to learn to move in these forms, when they were contemporary. It’s too late now. We only create a caricature of parliamentarism and without the slightest purpose. Through our whole past, our race and our situation, we are a monarchical people, that is, dependent on a government which leads with confidence and authority, whether the ruler is now to be called an Emperor or a Chancellor, just as the English are born Republicans whether or not they decorate the construction of their society with a royal spike.

The parliamentary age is irrevocably over. Its forms do nothing, they only burden us. In the big countries, anyone who knows how to judge, knows it, even if he is silent about it. Those who are at the height of their time had to be Democrats in 1830 and in 1930. Italy has gone through the act in this development. It is more Prussian today than Prussia[14] and no longer thinks of converting to democracy. In France, the elimination of the Chamber by an army-backed dictatorship is only a matter of time. In England, the tragicomedy of the workers’ government, will put an end to the parliamentary good will of the Labour Party, which will resort in the future to extra-parliamentary means, beginning with the general strike, and thus to paving the way for the Conservatives to break with the traditions of the House of Commons and establish the absolute rule of individual leaders. An old example is the anti-

democratic dictatorship of the Pitts[15] with liberal support when the French Revolution threatened to invade England. In America, in addition to the old party machines, strong movements are beginning, like those of farmers, which break the political tradition, and thus make the possibility of battles, such as in 1861, emerge, where a second president calls for the decision of arms. President Wilson had long ago stepped out of the barriers of old authority.

Germany is probably richer in statesmanship and organisational gifts than any country in the world. In the training of the priesthood by the church, the Officer Corps by the General Staff, the German merchant and technician by Hanseatic trade and Rhenish industry, the result of the training was always superior to such training by other countries. But in the political realm it has so far been a fatality that some do not know their powers, others are disgusted and the third are being used up prematurely by the Party. We have no established forms of political selection and education. We have no club, as in England, no salon as in France, where gifts are discovered, brought into contact with each other, put in their place. We grew up too fast. We each live by ourselves and are helpless when we sit together. In England, it is a good thing among the big parties who are in fact willing to discover, label and promote talents. Our parties are too stupid, and our old administration did not understand the demands of the situation. It had no tactical training principle that could deliver more than mediocre results; I'm not talking about the latest party ministers, because they did not even want that selection.

The need for new forms of government will one day approach us. Nobody knows the future. The great changes in the structure of state power have always been the result of blood and violence, victories or defeats, coups or revolutions, leading to the German and French constitutions of 1871, the empire of Napoleon, and [England's] Bill of Rights of 1688. But a goal must be present for the near future, as the existing conditions become untenable, and it cannot be the expression of so-called popular rights and democratic ideals in laws. I repeat, a people has only one right: to be governed well, and since it cannot take over itself as a mass without experience and overview, so it must be done by individuals and these must be properly selected and established. This is the whole secret of all well-governed states, and all constitutions elaborated

with deliberation can only secure - or prevent - what happens in primitive times with rapid use of force. The prerequisite is the insight that the parliamentary forms of the previous century are outdated and forever corrupted, above all because the large movable assets have come into a controlling relationship with party politics,[16] something which could not be foreseen in 1789, and because everywhere there are well organised groups with their own interests, which have to be eliminated if the government of an entire nation is to have meaning. The decision, as always, lies in the coincidence of the rise of great personalities, but the living form of governing must at least serve the purpose. It is, so to speak, the balance between the tasks of the time and the leadership material that is available. It must be so flexible that important men attain the full effect of their abilities, but with the limit that at the same time a powerful averaging is formed, which carries the course of affairs and does not completely depend on that accident.[17] An over-reliance on individual selection would mean a lack of continuity, resulting in a narrow horizon and rigid schematism. One must not forget for a moment that the best of all forms is in the unwritten constitution.

The future forms, which arise firstly from the time period, then from the dangerous geographical situation and the political situation of Germany created by the World War - externally and internally - and finally from the German national character, whose qualities for this task are partly favourable, are: an extraordinary strengthening of governance with a high degree of responsibility, which does not burden legislation and enactment, as has been the case up to now in daily parliamentary debates. It is more apt to have a comprehensive accountability report given and accepted or rejected at certain intervals. Not intentions but results should be subject to criticism. Continuous censure is already exercised by the press today; repetition in parliament has become utterly superfluous, causing only the emergence of self-interest, of vanity or business. The Chancellor should have the authority to choose a ministerial General Staff, with complete freedom in the number, composition and organisation of its major offices and the entire government apparatus. Likewise, this authority in personnel and organisational matters should be transferred from him to very independent heads of the leading ministries on a case-by-case basis. The Ministers are solely responsible to him and he alone for the

Ministers. The Chancellor should also, at his discretion, appoint a Council of State, where the best of talent and experience is gathered from all fields of politics and economics. This Council does not decide, but deliberates and advises. Properly used, it would become an academy for young talent, and they will get a practical insight into the problems and methods and will be tested and educated by special assignments. In addition to this Council of State, stands as an expression of the popular opinion the Reichstag, which should meet twice a year for short meetings, receive the statement of accounts for critique, recognising or rejecting the Budget and legislation - and the responsibility for doing so in a solemn declaration towards the people. For in the future each individual deputy of the Reichstag should be accountable to the people formed by new elections. It is illogical and contradicts the notion of popular representation that, that government Deputies are not held responsible to the people for the consequences of their behaviour. But since all constitutions today have been made by the parliaments themselves, they have deprived themselves of all liability. The government representatives must at all times be accountable to the people through elections.

Reichstag meetings should not be extended, except that the Chancellor may call special meetings with limited functions. The sessions are surrounded by dignity and solemnity as an expression of popular sovereignty. Attitude, clothing and expression are not incidental. An Assembly that lets itself go outside becomes inwardly undignified. Foul-mouthed behaviour, which is now universally monopolised, should be punished as an insult to the noblest organ of the nation by daily exclusion, loss of mandate and possibly prohibition of re-election by a supreme court.

The number of Deputies of today's parliaments are much too large due to the amateur terms of 1789. The votes of the Deputies everywhere make the work difficult for those able few who work alone, and also lead to a convenient opportunity for the intrusion of doubtful people with personal interests. 150 seats are more than enough for Germany. Even they are there just to vote yes or no, according to what the party leaders have decided among themselves. In addition, I suggest that five representatives of the Germans abroad are selected, for the Reichstag has hitherto lacked the horizon and the knowledge and assessment of the external

economic and power relations that are a vital issue. In order to overcome the German party hurdle and to achieve the formation of groups capable of judgement, the electoral law would have to make it impossible for more than four parties and those receiving less than one-tenth vote to gain Members of Parliament. In addition, a brilliant idea used by Mussolini, which incidentally is also part of the Bavarian Electoral Code, should enable the two strongest groups - or the strongest? - to appoint MPs from the best people outside of the political parties, who only have to undertake to work with the party, or to give up the seat if that is no longer compatible with their convictions. These members can therefore be changed at any time. In addition, each Member of Parliament would have to select a deputy, whom the party must approve and to which the deputy is accountable. In order to overcome the corruption prevalent in all of today's parliaments, dishonest business behaviour or conviction for common offenses should be cause for immediate and permanent exclusion from parliament. A people can demand the honour of its representatives. The dignity of the task demands that everyone to be elected vouch for their personal and business integrity by word of honour. Finally, at the beginning of the session, the Deputies ought to pledge to refrain from using their position as representatives of the people for any business advantage, and to take a solemn and public account on the last day that they have not derived any personal advantage from their position. Those who cannot take this oath are no longer eligible.

In conclusion, it must be pointed out that the level of English parliamentarism is due to the fact that the King chooses the Prime Minister. Hence, there is a position above all parties and business interests that, through its historical and dynastic tradition, is based on the honour and greatness of the nation and nothing but that.[18] If the actual influence consisted only in the approval of the proposal which the leader of the strongest party had to make to the King about the appointment of the highest office, it was still sufficient to make talent and honour a natural premise of the proposed Prime Minister. This moral support is lacking in states where the parties negotiate and decide on the choice among themselves and are responsible to no one but themselves. The Germans are a monarchical people, through their old Germanic heritage of loyalty and service, because their being in Central Europe forced them to join forces in a strong state if they did not want to be the victims of

all their neighbours. One day, when some sun falls on our being again, the sleeping yearning for this symbolic coronation of the State will seek and find its fulfilment, and the Head of State will be guided solely by historical tasks.

2. Civil Service and Personality

Spengler details his views on the need for the civil service to be the basis of a new aristocracy of merit, founded on character, personal responsibility and honour, paralleling how a German officer corps had been developed. He sees youth, with its recent war experiences, as the well-spring of this new aristocracy of service and duty, with civil servants that must not only be mentally agile and personally responsible but subjected to life experiences, including the cultivation of physical and mental fitness through sports. This new civil service would be the centre of a permanent administration above party politics, parliaments and even dictators, providing a continuity of administration beyond political vicissitudes. Character and ability would be the basis of promotions rather than education from academia, class background, age and even seniority of service. The civil service would be trimmed of superfluous numbers, efficiency through personal responsibility would replace plodding bureaucracy. This is the basis of Spengler's "Prussian socialism."

- § -

A people is what you make of it. By itself, every nation is incapable of fulfilling the conditions that the world situation has posed for centuries, if it wants to prevail or even assert itself. But its fate does not depend on ideas, but on people, not theories or decisions about what this or that should be, but personalities who can do and do what needs to be done. A conductive type is necessary which embodies and develops the creative qualities of the people with regard to their historical situation. The English achievements since Cromwell are, not due to the emergence of very great statesmen - they are quite rare - but to the fact that since the destruction of old Merry England by Puritanism a permanent stratum with a very uniform conception of life has existed. Without that stratum, the leaders would not have achieved anything, but with it England could continue for decades without brilliant leaders. Puritanism assigns to the individual the moral justification before himself,

giving him the great feeling of security that what he wants must be the right thing, because otherwise God would not have given him this will; the commercial economic attitude, which leaves the individual completely free rein, but does not support him if he fails; finally and not least the sport, where victory depends on the personal energy of the individual and has bred a human type whose tenacity has at least been equal to any danger. In France, the type comprising the whole people was not created by Louis XIV or even the Revolution, but by Napoleon; the Frenchman of the nineteenth century is a new man compared to that of the *ancien régime*, and the impulse which he received by the model of the Emperor, by his ambition and his educational system in school and army, has sustained him once again during the World War. Breeding in this sense can only be a tremendous emotional experience or a great personality. We did not have in our history a leadership type that possessed solid qualities. Not only is there an English society, but also “the Englishman”, but so far there is no German society, only Germans. Twice so far the attempt has been made to develop a very efficient type in a smaller area, first in the creation of the Prussian civil service by Frederick William I, then by Moltke and his creation of the Prussian-German officer. It is thanks to both of them and to them alone that we know today what is important.

In *Prussianism and Socialism* I had shown how, instead of a rich and poor class society as on the English island, in the threatened northern German plain a state divided into orders, and obedience had to develop. For this state, without which we as a people are not viable, created the soldier king as the living embodiment of Prussia, which did not exist until then, first as an estate with an unshakeable sense of honour and duty, with conscientiousness and discipline, for whom selfless, hard work was natural and praise was given only sparingly and was never expected. Frederick the Great has presented this type in an unprecedented performance, but he had not developed it, and in the wars of liberation we neither had a general German type nor did we create one. That would have been the meaning of the time, but we needed a man of towering stature and exemplary nature and did not find him. We had officers, but not “the German officer,” as there was a French officer since Napoleon; statesmen, but not “the statesman” as in England; poets and thinkers. Instead of the French and English concepts of freedom, a German that looked different in every head, every

German thought differently, and there was a colourful mass of ideals in life, politics and the professions.[19]

Nevertheless, we have very gifted and educated human material. Wherever anyone had access, such as Friedrich Wilhelm and Moltke, the church in the training of their priesthood, or Bebel in the organisation of his party, or even the technocrats in their industries and laboratories, the result was always extraordinary.

Then came the Kingdom, the personal creation of Bismarck, himself a late creation of the great Prussian King, and began the task of finding the type of leaders for this politically and economically gigantic ascending world power in its endangered situation and with its countless new problems, in which one could lay the future in their hands. Bismarck and Moltke have recognised this task, but treated it fundamentally differently. The result is with us today, and I do not doubt that future generations will recognise Moltke as the greater, because he continued to look and continue to work. He knew that he would experience future wars and therefore he created in the Great General Staff an independently evolving tradition of military education, and the methods and means to always keep up with the times. Here we have a German type, which was created in 1870, fully developed in 1914; which has since remained the only German type, who have imprinted unnoticed something of their attitude and world-view on every single German, including Bebel workers' party: this is what foreigners call German militarism.

Bismarck, on the other hand, left the government and administration as they were, and only established his own office for his work. Like Napoleon and the leaders of today's German industry, he felt the need to basically do everything himself and to surround himself only with assistants, not to create people for future deeds, while English politicians and industrialists - by the way, also the statesmen of the 17th and 18th centuries - educate juniors at an early age as substitutes and successors, so that the work finally proceeds on its own course, and needs only to be controlled in the details. Bismarck did not develop the civil service, but only increased it, just as he did not change the school in its principles and goals and, above all, did not change it for political education. There was one outstanding diplomat - himself - but no diplomatic school; there were ministers, but they were stewards,

not creators; and when he left, he left no general staff, no self-evolving organism, but a leaderless machine, as the armies of Napoleon were mindless, if he did not lead them. This type of official, now 150 years old, was destined for a medium-sized agricultural country and was never seriously updated. With world trade, world industry, world traffic, and the growing power of big financial fortunes, his brilliant advantages began to become ineffective and his mistakes a growing burden. The workers continued to do excellent work, but there was an increasing ignorance and underestimation of the world economic forms and powers of the upper classes, which did not receive any fresh blood from the Hanseatic merchants and industry, and there was no understanding of world politics. We were only militarily prepared for the war. That there were other preparations required was not even suspected. The administration was often an end in itself; it became petrified - that is the danger of the state in peaceful times. Strong administrative talents were left - other talents did not develop; they suffocated or went over to industry - becoming old and staid at an early age - and these too came into their own much too late.

The tremendous importance of educating civil servants lies in the fact that almost one-sixth of the population belongs to it in some way, and is universally respected, envied and imitated, so that its conscious training is equal to that of the whole people and perhaps more effective than that of the public schools, because it does not shape knowledge and thinking, but doing and behaving.

The greatest advantage of this old-time bureaucracy lay in its moral outlook. In all other countries, civil service is a profession, an acquisition like any other. In Prussia, the official since Frederick William I forms a class like the officers and judges. The sense of honour is not attached to the work as in the old guilds, but to the fact of service, of service in the Germanic sense of a proud subordination. The official embodies the sovereignty. This results in implied duties and rights, ranging from the strict outer attitude and leadership to the smallest features of conscience and privacy within, and ending at the silent sacrifice for one thing, the life that is consecrated in this. All this had been accomplished to an astounding degree. Prussianism is “Roman” in character and resembles the spirit of the soldier who died at the city gate of

Vesuvius during the eruption of Pompeii.[20] At least that was the imperative at the end of the last century. The most conscientious performance was the rule. Nobody paid attention to it, because it did not even become conscious.

We do not want to be fooled into thinking that revolution and parliamentarism have destroyed that too. Since there are unions of civil servants, party ministers, and the state providing a livelihood for party members, and since it is often not achievement that determines promotion, but zeal for a party, service becomes more comfortable, supervision more casual, and work mediocre, the rest of the state dissolves in an increase of employees who no longer know the traditional ethic. But without a moral idea, the German official will not be conceivable in the future if he is not to sink into being a mere earner of money. Without the state officials Germans as a people are inconceivable, both as a race and as their ability to recognise their dangerous position. From the conditions of the twentieth century, an idea of the civil service must again be developed, a moral sense capable of sustaining the state in the future. A goal must surely be at least shown and for the many to see.

It was a misfortune that, by accepting a candidate for the civil service, the state actually took on the obligation to provide for him for life. From then on promotion by age, salary increases, and titles all followed. A promotion out of line, or a discharging of unsuitable elements as in the army did not exist. On the contrary, in recent times the number of posts has sometimes increased to cater for the number of “candidates” that has surpassed requirements. In this situation those who had been students, energetic, active, independent, with their heads full of plans, became uninspired, methodical, impersonal, cumbersome, attached to the form as a form. Was there an official who was doing sports? In England they do, and they stay young. One-sixth of the population as civil servants freed from the struggle for existence! This has had a negative effect on the German spirit. The tendency to carefree strolling and dreaming beyond all reality turned into the impulse for the state crib, to the pension entitlement, which created a petty-bourgeois happiness without any conflicts of life.

For this lack of a personal struggle, the Michel stratum grew to gigantic size, with its ignorance of the political dangers of the pre-

war situation, and its confusion of politics with the proclamations of the government by the newspapers of the parties. But in addition to this came an education which, in contrast to the army, had previously been burdened with all sorts of university knowledge, above all Roman law, and subsequently stopped in service where it should have started. An early personal and practical knowledge of our shipping, smelting works, banks or foreign countries was neither expected nor appreciated, and yet it would have been more important to all branches of administration, not just transport and finance. Added to this is the collegiate system of the 18th century, which is no longer compatible with modern tasks and yet completely dominated state management. It also took away the individual's concern for individual personal responsibility.

Nothing has more to do with the internal dependence of the official than his inclination to be part of the herd, to await the decision of the others, influenced by the activity of an anonymous majority, in which the judgement, will, determination and liability of the individual disappear. Here, too, it was the army that raised the officer for early independence and responsibility. It is not the command of the army that wins battles but the general. Every officer expected to be removed, if he did not personally meet requirements. But contrary to the situation in England, where a Judge did not pronounce the verdict of a trial, in Germany it was "the Tribunal." For big tasks no commissioner was appointed, but a commission. Decisions were not the responsibility of an accountable individual, but by the railway directorate, the tax office, the Ministry. Instead of swift decisions, instead of a two-minute discussion of two authorities, there were infinite meetings and committees. The individual disappeared behind the office. Mechanical authority prevailed, over-administration. There was no field for the free and creative personality. Anyone who was not an anonymous member of the whole was uncomfortable. Men not regulations – that is Germanic! - was reversed in the bureaucracy. These mistakes have become fateful for Germany, and today, where we must start again from the beginning, with the education of the civil service that can only be based on Moltke's idea of the education of the army.

For this new beginning, a new German type has quietly formed, which has come up with the sports of the last decades and the slow

intellectual preponderance of industrial and commercial authorities over the state. It found its first glorious expression in the young volunteers of 1914. These are our future leaders whose character type has been created. Very self-reliant, dynamic, practical, swiftly resolved, gladly burdened with responsibility, and single-minded, ready for intelligent obedience, capable of cooperation not by the scheme of a service ordinance, but by an instinctive feeling about what is needed. They are a generation of promise. They are not found in philosophical seminars and not in literature or in art. A worldview is no problem for them. They have fallen en masse at the front, but they are growing, and for this young Germany, I would like to draw a picture of how I imagine the state administration can be with them and through them, as they are, cleverly, proudly, personally and internally free bearers of a German ethos from Old Germanic times, which only now has woken up as the best heritage from the years of the rise of the empire.

So no longer a feeding trough, no candidates, no right to the civil service except by probation, no special claim as a result of any scholarly education; also the heads should get to know the transmission from below. It goes without saying that a high degree of education, no matter where, must be presupposed in the upper ranks. A sharp intelligence test at the very beginning, as required, by experts, more a test of practical knowledge than determination of theoretical knowledge, then five years' probation subject to dismissal as in the private sector, with dismissal of unsuitable elements without hesitation; then strict selection of leaders on a contract for five years, then ten years with tacit renewal; pension entitlement for long and good performance.

Great and growing demands on character, intelligence, work, determination, comprehension. Early independent execution of special orders (situation reports, organisation and supplementation of material, rapid organisation in exceptional cases and the like) with flat-rate supplements to the basic salary. Every single one develops their facilities; continuous personal training by a supervisor, by example, criticism, instruction; voluntary personal missions, secondment to other departments to get to know all branches of the business, commercial, technical, legal. Instead of repeated examinations: strict tests, such as on independent organisation of the service at congresses or on special occasions,

sudden substitution of supervisors, attendance at meetings, inspection trips with reports.

The cultivation of civil servants must be fundamentally different for leading and overseas agencies. The boundary between the upper and lower classes must not be produced by high school education, as it is today, or blurred by automatic promotion. There are completely different tasks, different characteristics, different goals.

The qualities of the lower class cannot be more correctly determined than they were unconsciously felt by Frederick William I in the creation of his civil service. An exemplary attitude of the superiors, exemplary spirit of the offices; care of ambition through praise and blame, commendation, smart discipline, mental independence, inner freedom. The outer attitude is not incidental. We are, as a people, formless and without manners; the civil service should be educational beyond the offices. Cleanliness, Punctuality, Strength in the service. The service uniform should not be vain, but worn proudly. It emphasises the sense of standing, the obviousness of outstanding achievements and the most conscientious fulfilment of duties. Even titles are not a minor matter, but they should be sparing, awarded for a life full of work and successes. Titles that anyone can replace, such as our twelve dozen sonorous names for the different chairs of office, are ridiculous. Finally award by study trips early on, also abroad, posting to congresses to support very senior bosses. And finally: official promotion of sport in the civil service; fresh air, health, pride in physical strength and dexterity. The dust on the soul must become a thing of the past. The civil service should stay young in outlook.

The chain of leadership should be created like that always undertaken by the great creators: Moltke in the army; the most successful leaders in the private sector. A thin, elastic chain of utmost efficiency. The high offices are far too dense and cumbersome. For the heads, there should be no fixed positions in a rigid service order, but personal powers from case to case. Handover of the office with a disposition fund and unconditional freedom in organisational and personnel matters. Formation of a personal staff, advisory experts, substitute members. No promotion based on years of employment. The youngest cashier should be allowed to leap to the position of private secretary of a director-general, if the latter trusts him and takes responsibility for it.

Recruiting of particularly suitable people from private companies should not be ruled out. Let the great talents be completely free within the limits necessary for the general course of business! Extensive decentralisation; division of large offices into independent posts with graduated authority and corresponding personal liability. Only then can you discover and cultivate great talents. Personal communications between the bosses instead of file transfers; everything granted to great experience, quick personal decisions and a superior understanding of the executive bodies. To develop a high, spiritual, energetic tradition of business communication and, more than that, to educate good subordinates.

Entering this higher circle should be a risk and should be open to even the lowest official. No automatic advancement, but recommendations regardless of age and time of service. No fixed hierarchy of high posts and titles. Instead of permanent title, the term "Commissioned with –," i.e. *Abkommandieren* for large tasks and reversion to the previous rank, if the task has not succeeded. Continuing basic salary by seniority, but very high allowances for these commands, according to the amount and scope of power and responsibility, and only for the duration of the task. Youth should never be an obstacle to promotion; on the contrary. We have to get to the point where a telegraph-messenger can become Secretary of State in three years and that ministers of twenty-five are possible, like Pitt in England and the Bonapartes in France. Only when every young man feels the marshal's staff in his knapsack and there are no more obstacles of age, and there is the position and the pace of promotion for ingenious people, can we come to the complete utilisation of the gifts that go undetected and lost in Germany today because they are uncomfortable in a system of prematurely old and rigid "officials."

The goal here is to create a layer of commanders of the first order. The leadership qualities must be discovered through the course of business and great personal freedom, developed to perfection. The sense of status here is a sense of distance, a high consciousness of spiritual and business superiority. We need for the State an official aristocracy, no longer based on birth, *Vorbildung* and titles, but on high characteristics. The consciousness of it, the pride of mastery, the sense of the right to rule through capacity for it, but with an attitude of obligation, where inner qualities are

expressed in external life. This layer in Germany - and its ethos - should be respected for its leadership, and exemplary in every sense. This includes an independence and breadth of life, which must be secured by appropriate income. The subaltern spirit of high places was until now also a consequence of the lack of financial freedom of movement. Anyone who has been used to writing files by hand for 20 years because he has no funds to go to a verbal meeting of two minutes thinks so too. This is how our whole administration thought.

I think it is not only right to set aside at the end of a long and exceptionally successful career - a castle with a title - but also to enable leaders during their careers to have a standard of living equal to that of the great economic leaders.

3. Education - Breeding or Education?

Spengler, prior to being recognised as Germany's pre-eminent philosopher-historian of the Weimar era, and receiving worldwide recognition, was largely autodidactic, although attaining a doctorate, and taught history, chemistry and mathematics at secondary school. In this section he places much importance on autodidactic study and recommends that this should be recognised as an important element beyond the formal school system that should enable those with a zeal for learning to attain recognition from examinations outside the school setting. He believed that the most gifted youth could be found outside the education system, and among those who had not been able to conform to a system that did not cater for their interests and character. He sought education methods that would encourage self-reliance, initiative and maintain physical vigour through sports. Subjects should be relevant to the needs of the future of Germany in the world and the forming of a new German leadership stratum from all suitable elements of German youth. While criticising the focus on Classical history and culture in the schools (Spengler after all regarded Western Civilisation as a unique organism and, unlike many historians, not as a continuation of the Greco-Roman) he did affirm the learning of Latin as an excellent training for mental discipline. He also urges that a series of books, outside the school texts, be written by experts with first-hand life experiences, and relevant to the world situation, on a range of subjects from which youth can be self-taught.

- § -

It cannot be my intention to present here the draft of a future educational system. I hope to be able to do that thoroughly later, and then perhaps not without a practical reason. I myself have been very close to these questions for some years, and I believe I know

the profound advantages and the equally great weaknesses, especially of old age, in what was then existing. Since war and revolution also devastated and poisoned everything here, tradition, spirit, people, methods, I shall state in a few words what I think of the structure and new building for later times; how Germany, in the future, must be organised if it wants to send its young people into the world in a different, more intelligent way than our generation was sent.

What was important at the old school, especially the humanistic Gymnasium, can be summed up in two words: Wilhelm von Humboldt[21] and Classicism. There were great qualities in this, a simple piety, high moral demands of the individual on himself; a long and conscientious formal training that began and ended with Latin. The habituation to duties, diligence, truth, thoroughness was implanted early and forever. A Stoic conception of the world, by reading Cicero, encouraged a contempt for pleasure, a contempt for small personal advantages. But this public school put an end to the eighteenth-century education, which, however great its shortcomings, took place in the midst of the world and with serene knowledge of the world, its situations and conditions. A grey seriousness lay since then in the classes and corridors, before which there was only a bitter hatred, inner rebellion or dull sickening. The monastery school, not the page education of the age of knights, was the model. The moral imperative was certainly of spiritual, not martial, origin.

And this classicism was after all only a fine, uninspired bourgeois echo of the Renaissance, which lost itself more and more in pedantic aestheticisation and frosty formalism; the world of the schoolmaster, that enthusiastic sergeant of grammar. What was going on outside only distracted the student from Horace and Livy. And this classicism was also anti-historical through and through. Only timeless ancient questions of Latin were worthy to be treated. Even when studying Caesar his use of the accusative *cum infinitivo* was more important than the conquest of Gaul itself. No historical event shone in, no timeline, no great contemporary. Not Abraham Lincoln, but Jugurtha, not the Panama Canal, but the Via Appia were named. All books were written by schoolmasters for learning. From the high school comes the political alienation of the 19th century, which knew Roman weapons better than Japanese world

power goals. We were educated for everything, theology, philology and philosophy, but not for the dangers of the world situation, which were lying around us, because of them the teacher himself knew nothing. What was known everywhere else where there was a true education of a great kind - in the families of Roman senators, in court circles of the age of chivalry, in the eighteenth century, in England at Eton and Oxford, and still today in some circles of Germany who by rank and profession are close to the great reality of learning the facts and living example – was that of education and discipline, knowledge and tact, scientific and social experience. The way to hold oneself, to move in public, to judge, to express oneself - that is not of secondary importance. The true educator works more through what he is than what he says. By doing so, every good society educates. And no one keeps his soul, who does not maintain his appearance. The eye learns faster and deeper than the mere mind. And finally: externality also implies a certainty of appearance in the world on which our destiny depends. The trained eye for facts, situations, dangers first makes mere knowledge valuable. First attitude and then knowledge - but as a nation, we had no breeding at all and far too much education. We were replete with knowledge without life, tireless, futile, aimless, of teachers who knew no other task. But one is learning, the other is wisdom, Life experience, worldliness - where was it?

The type of teacher! We neither have the old, long-obsolete, nor do we have the new type yet. But there must be something, a model appearance, a piece of significant and superior reality that grabs the student and pulls him along. The blessed school master in the shabby trousers, the head full of Horace verses, could awe - but in a time when there were no cars and planes. Much is lost if, at a young age, you cannot pay attention to your teachers; when you feel superior to them, laugh at them. But a gifted boy is hungry for the reality of his own years. We need educators who have experienced life and feel at ease, who know how to teach, who have matured socially, who know the world, who do sports, in which the student has the feeling that he personally comes closer to the facts of the time. Seminary and college are nowhere near enough to prepare for this task, which is posed by the student material of the time, for slowly waking the student up to new life goals and forms. It is necessary and sufficient to get to master a subject - besides knowing two or three others - but not exclusively in the lecture hall. We need

to free the teacher from monastic, closed ideals if he is to free the student. We must not watch a gifted person get used to chanting homerous[22] things while the country collapses. Anyone who wants to teach English, should work a year in an English company. Here, and not in Shakespeare, one gets to know the Englishman, his way of life and his political thinking. And that is the purpose of a serious English lesson: language as a concept of the character and of the times, of the historical situation of this people and its empire. The best reading for this is *The Times*, also linguistically, provided that the teacher has learned how to read between the lines. Anyone can read the poets at home, too, and Shakespeare is too good for picking out extracts for the writing of essays.

Anyone who teaches physics and chemistry should have been in a smelting works for a while, for the young generation must be given a glimpse of how German willpower and its organisational gift have built up an industry without which half of our people could not live. The names Borsig, Siemens, Krupp, Ehrhardt should become an inner experience of their work. The importance of shipbuilding and shipping should be taught in their broad outlines, and the future problem of the development of coal and its political significance. The ownership of iron ore deposits and our ore losses through the Treaty of Versailles, the idea of Stinnes to put into one hand the industries in the processing of a product to make the way from raw material to finished product as simple and cheap as possible; the meaning of intensive agriculture by the chemical treatment of the soil. What did we know of all these things when the war broke out because of these things?

And anyone who studies history, including Greek or Roman, should know the diplomatic records of the last century thoroughly and, as a secretary at an embassy or consulate-general, should have felt up close how history is made. He can then teach his subordinates that there are more things between heaven and earth than the scholastic wisdom dreamed of by our historians. The state examination can be replaced by a diploma examination on individual subjects. The pedagogical craft is first learned from the living object, and the diploma would free the transition to another profession (engineer, interpreter, private secretary) if someone realises that he has chosen the wrong specialty.

Now for the meaning of higher education! Is the student still

conscious of a clear task, as in the time of Humboldt, or does he fall into a bundle of subjects that are operated as an end in itself due to departmental loyalty? Should he only study a piece of preparatory work at the university, or gain that half-knowledge in all fields that we call education? Since the humanistic ideals have faded, one feels an anxious effort not to let the pupil do anything by himself, to think or to feel. The labour-power is fully used for teaching, every conceivable object is pedagogically given, before the hunger is there; all books are school books; all permitted thinking should be directed educatively. But for what? I mean, here is the stratum bred to carry Germany's fortunes; to lead socially, spiritually, politically, economically. Therefore, qualities needed today are: wisdom, foresight, perseverance, discipline and above all personal independence. Anyone who is somehow included in the European-American world today is autodidact to a barely anticipated degree, the German even more than other people. Even at school, we make what we hear and see a quiet personal lesson for our needs, perhaps barely conscious; but for that very reason, higher education should arouse and awaken the truly gifted, place them before a wide range of possibilities, than press them into a firm form. But this includes free time, open libraries, the permission to select within certain limits the lessons and materials, study clubs of the students among themselves, but above all the important book, which has always been the great mediator; the reality regardless of even the best teachers.

But what books are in the hands of our youth! Has anyone ever turned to the psychology of the German textbook? The world as a learning material, history as a memory exercise, life divided into paragraphs! Who wrote all these books? People who knew the stuff only from other books. There is nothing more foreign, narrower, flatter than the normal textbook, today the only one that comes *ex officio* into student hands. Here I suggest that as a supplement to these books should be extensive manuals for those who want to educate themselves. These books should not be used for teaching. They would have to contain excellent bibliographical references and other hints to enable them to work independently in libraries and elsewhere, and they would have to be written by the best experts we have. It should become the noble habit of leading personalities to lay down at the height of their lives all their experience in a good book for the youth. A statesman should write the history of the last

century from a global political point of view, with maps, statistics and quotations from the files. A military leader should write the history of war since Frederick the Great; a great industrialist or merchant, should write of today's global economy. For English lessons, we need a picture of modern England and its colonial empire with its political and economic structure (Carl Peters should have written that);[23] and also a penetrating account of German poetry and fine art (perhaps by Dehio)[24]; a handbook of physics and its foundations of knowledge, and a handbook of technology, especially its applications. This is the world in which every gifted German may finally be his own teacher.

Three to four hours a day, strict, concentrated, with high demands, and a free study day every week, as a reward: this is what must be done. In addition, two hours of sports and the rest of the time for self-education. "All for all" is a meaningless principle which today obscures the lack of a real goal.

And now for the individual areas: Religion should be honest, serious, strong, and not just all words. An institution steeped in simple piety, as there were many in the past, yes, but not through half-measures, "dogma-less moral teaching," "the doctrine of the universe," or whatever one might call the replacement of religion by the arts.

At the centre I would still put Latin, even today. Germany owed more than it realised to the thorough Latin operation of its grammar schools during the last century: its intellectual discipline, its organisational talent, its technology. It is the long-standing, daily, pedantic habit of thinking in the most disciplined language that exists, the way of working mentally, which has since become an inherited tradition in laboratories, workshops, and offices. I consider this core of our spiritual armour to be more indispensable today than ever. There is no substitute for it, not even by the very mechanical thinking of mathematics. It practically saved us spiritually from the consequences of Romanticism, and it would free us today for real achievements that life will demand of us in the world. Whether someone is a good or bad at Latin does not matter. He only has to be forced to work for years at the discipline.

Then German: there is no other nation that speaks and writes its mother tongue so miserably. We never had a high school of German

style; we have no work on the art of writing well - Nietzsche could have given it to us, but who else? - and the teachers of German usually do not understand it themselves. If anything should improve here, the German essay must first vanish, this educator for trash and *Schmockliteratur*, with the mendacity of his structure, its phrases and sentence structure, its treatment of things about which neither the pupil nor the teacher or anyone else has something sensible to say, but for which German literature is often violated. No, if we want to learn to write in a manner that is informal, clear, deep, and thorough, we must express ourselves through something that is familiar to us, the simplest knowledge of physics and mathematics, the representation of a historical event, the explanation of geographical or economic facts, daily, as a matter of effortless habit, without being inhibited by several hours of examinations with a pile of white paper on the table. No solemn disposition, but informal writing in one go, without thinking about arrangement and choice of words, because you already have it in your head: that's the way to a good, self-evident style. Here, too, a book about the art of good writing is needed.

History lessons, or the political education of the people by the school: who would have understood earlier that both are the same? The best-known history teachers were learned, enthusiastic, patriots, but completely unworldly and politically unaware. After all, they were all philologists or theologians. We were sitting under the collapsing tower and announcing the Battle of Canna, but our teachers themselves knew nothing about the American Civil War and its massive battles. If they had known, they would have judged America's entry into the world war differently. In England and France the task of the school was better understood. History is not a learning material or a playground for philanthropic feelings. What we need is a strong, daily, profound education of the national consciousness, as a deliberate attitude, but with the substructure of a ruthlessly factual description of recent history with its powers and power goals, its political, military, economic and propaganda means, with the geographical conditions of maritime trade and naval warfare, supply of raw materials and export; and since a teacher, if he is not a genius, cannot know all that - even though he really ought to - there remains only the books that experts have written and endowed by all means with their own insights into the problems. To know that all politics is power politics, that weakness

means annihilation; to know that every individual must live, think and act as an indispensable member of his nation, with every breath; and to know where and how the great decisions of the last decades prepare the future ones - to bring them to full understanding is what I call history lessons, which must be conducted strictly, daily, for years, and also places ancient and medieval history under comparative and real-political viewpoints. Each school should have their debating clubs discussing the day's events, fiscal policy, monetary issues, the potential consequences of political tensions and treaties.

On the other hand, everything else is simple: the foreign languages through which one understands at the same time the peoples, as they are in the present reality, and not, as they are in their poetry; the mathematics and physics that are to be utilised practically and with the perspective of their present application; botany and zoology, which may be left to the private study of those who are drawn to it, since the fashion of Darwinism is over; geography, considered to the extent when it is connected to high politics and the economy; philosophy that can be found in the form of the logical and the psychological; so that any young person will find time to grow with the assurance of being free and proud with the world on his own feet, with a clear conscience, an unspoiled eye for reality, and a reverence for its mystery.

Finally and above all, I want to demand one more thing to secure the freedom of the personality and the selection of all real gifts through a practical institution: The separation of the school leaving certificate from the school.

In Germany, perhaps more so than elsewhere, there are a lot of young people, smart, of race,[25] honest, proud, of the very best character, who are not suited to the methodical school system. Thousands of them were internally broken under the pressure of this system, expelled, run away and gone to America, or lost in poor professions because they had rebelled against uniform compulsion by some foolishness and found no other way in our system. They were thus excluded from the hierarchy of examinations for higher professions, while couch potatoes and model boys passed through. But it is on this first type that our future depends; more so than the good and bloodless mediocrity. The existing system excluded autodidacts; also excluded are the many who develop late in our

race, leave education at fifteen, but are suddenly awake at twenty-five, and finally those who are excluded because their parents were too poor. If there is any question of democracy, it must happen here. The school may give certificates of good conduct, as a verdict on the results of a student's breeding, but the intellectual rank should be determined quite impartially, independently of all schools, by a Reich examination. Everyone should be allowed to take this regardless of age, sex, position and previous education. No father should need to keep his sons in high school at all costs, because taking the final exam would in future be without time limit regardless of one's present occupation. The examination would have to take place several times a year throughout the Reich and everywhere on the same days, for instance in the town halls, with exactly the same tasks, carefully worked out and printed by an independent commission. The individual questionnaires are processed on six days at intervals of one week each, each lasting about three hours of written examinations. Each should consist of one or two statements and a brief answer to questions which require more skill than learned knowledge. The tasks are divided into numerous large groups, for personal selection according to disposition and intention of the individual within fixed limits, and a minimum number must be answered. The number of examination days and questions and their versatility eliminate chance. Correction is done without knowing the name and place of examination according to carefully defined rules, for which older students and prospective teachers are sufficiently available. The result - which at the same time constantly and publicly examines schools, types of schools, as well as private education on their achievements - is a diploma with a title, equivalent to a former licentiate or bachelor's degree, or a doctoral degree of lesser rank. Anyone who is really capable of doing so can be reached with a corresponding amount of diligence and work, and this could provide a very objective selection of the gifts of Germany. That seems to me to be the real meaning of the word *Reifeprüfung*.[26]

Ultimately, I would like to have a German Eton, as a school for the noblest breed of outstandingly gifted people. Why should not such schools be created from Schulpforta, the Tübinger Stift, the Johanneum in Hamburg, the Francke Foundations in Halle, Ettal Abbey, with large facilities for every conceivable kind of study: with much sport, and with the visits of famous men, assessing youth

for possible tasks, and who speak from their own experience about what the world will one day ask of them? Finally, I urge the establishment of a school for the especially gifted, where Germany's future aristocracy of merit and character, the new leadership stratum, can be instructed.

4. Rights as a Result of Duties

Spengler considers how Germanic law might be implemented, where rights are linked to duties, honour is the central ethos, and family, property, inheritance, people, nation, and state are parts of a totality that are vigorously protected. A sense of individual responsibility is again a primary focus. Recognition of the change of the character of property, which has become nebulous, impersonal and unbound to place - what we call today “globalisation” - is addressed by Spengler as a major element in the erosion of moral and honourable conduct throughout the nation. Dishonourable actions in economic transactions should be dealt with in a punitive manner. A Germanic custom of law, an élan, needs cultivating, replacing Roman law that has dominated Germany.

- § -

In law, the world-view of a people, its soul, should be expressed in a pure and unclouded way. Law is the desired outward form of existence as it runs within the boundaries of a historically mobilised whole, a nation, a state. But this external form is always, if it is to be real, the result not only of historical development, but above all of the inner form of its existence, that is, of the character of a nation. The Roman needs different rights than the Athenian, the German needs others than those of the Englishman. A universally correct law exists only in the minds of scholars outside of life experience, and zealots.[27]

Accordingly, the source of every living right must be life itself. The presupposition for the enactment of clear commandments and prohibitions is a life experience acquired largely from present-day society, economy, and politics by one’s own activity. The Roman praetor did not study Greek or Egyptian law. From his understanding of all the conditions of the Roman world around him, the praetor understood himself as a civil servant, army commander and financier. Therein lies the example for us not of Roman law itself, but of its origin.

It was a fatality for the German people that the old Germanic rights, which had been evolved by living custom since the migration of peoples, had been replaced and destroyed by Roman jurisprudence since 1495.[28] In England, the steadily developed Norman rights are still valid today. The French Civil Code, created under Napoleon, is based not only on his immense knowledge of human nature and practical experience in all areas of administration and finance, but also on that of his collaborators, who were extraordinary people who had experienced the school of the Revolution. Only today's Germany is the real source of our rights not that of the experience of life of time, not that of life at all, but a Latin book. The training of judges is not based on an early practice of law, but on a learned theory, on the practise of the ever finer splitting and linking of abstract concepts. Formal exercise replaces knowledge and world experience. "Today's German jurisprudence is to a great extent an heir to the scholasticism of the Middle Ages. A legal-theoretical reflection on the fundamental values of our real life has not yet begun. We do not even know these values."[29] This did not get any better with the founding of the German Reich, it only got worse. Both the civil code and the penal code have been created exclusively by legal scholars and professional judges. In both works, the Roman division of the legal substance into legal terms prevails.

It has been a bitter revenge that instead of the Roman praetor we received Roman law itself as a model. Creative law development was replaced by a bitter struggle of life against the book and the letter, a struggle that forced concessions on the part of legislators only slowly and far too late. In Germany we everywhere find a profound aversion to "authority," the "court," even the state, as well as to what is foreign, based above all on the fact that our entire social and economic life is in fact forcibly weakened. This is intrinsically alien to us, and it is under the supervision of a section of civil servants brought up by the same law in a purely formal and theoretical manner. Even the hatred of "capital" by Marxism owes its success especially in Germany because the entire economic legislation is a flat and brutal concept of the Roman – replacing the Germanic concept of property.

Any evolved law is the result of obligations. This is how it always and everywhere was, and on it rests the deep moral force of

genuine legal concepts, in whose secret metaphysics the life cycle of a race beats. What we Germans lack – unlike the Englishman – is the long, silent education of the people in their own rights, born of their blood and grown and matured with them. Roman law was also based on duties, namely, the strict duties of the Roman citizen, which would appear to us, being a completely different people, as unbearable slavery. Anglo-Norman masculinity was based on the willingness of the nobility to sacrifice life and property at any time for the ruler, but then treat him as the first among his peers. From this comes the modern pride of the Englishman, the idea of English freedom, of “my home is my castle”. Everywhere, it is duties that generate rights. Today’s German law lacks this idea, as it lacks all ideas. It contains in place of great perceived duties - criminal law.

Roman law has corrupted us. It came dangerously contrary to the inclinations of the German *Michel*, to dream, to reject everything Actual. The miserable past, the bundle of dwarf states and petty rulers, where there were no tasks except those which were not worth the effort, - this whole crumbling world of dusty Gothic has broken our pride. For the pride of a nation is based on its rights.

On this soil arose the soulless Roman law of the German nation. It is not to be forgotten that the part of the *corpus juris* in question, the rights of *pandectom*,[30] which resulted from the official activity of *Praetor peregrinus*,[31] does not belong to that of the much more distinguished *praetor urbanus*.[32] This latter official had to deal with his peers, Roman citizens, and with foreigners, that is, mere objects of Roman power. In the imperial era, all peoples were objects of this power, and this “international law” (*jus gentium*) was commented upon by learned jurists in the Orient since ٢٠٠ AD, the bulk of these comments being collected, extracted and reinterpreted in Oriental terms. This is how the *pandect* law for Byzantium came to be, that is, for an Oriental society, where the ruler knew only submission - Islam is submission - but where there were no rights of personality and no free will. Rome itself was then owned by Teutons.

But Germanic life underlies the idea of freedom. It wants to be free from all barriers which resist its inner form and its external expression. The Teuton feels free to face the whole world, as a personality, as a man, each for himself, just as he stands as a believing Christian, praying or repenting, alone before his god. This

Nordic sense of life has spread the migration of peoples with the Saxons, Goths, Franks and Normans across the whole of Western Europe, and from them with the age of the Knights and the Crusades the type of all present-day peoples of the Occident emerged. It was not only the basic problem of Gothic reflection, the freedom of the will, but also the many characters who had solved this problem, by the appearance of the Vikings and Staufen emperors, to the trappers of America and the inventors and organisers of our day. And if the Teuton served humbly as a Knight of the Order, as in the German East and in the struggle against the Moors, he did so as a sacrifice of himself in a free decision of his right of a higher cause. To undertake this duty in inner freedom is his highest right. On it are based the proud ideals of Gothic loyalty, and the officer duty of the civil service of old Prussia. *Pandectism* is alienated from and unknown to this soul-like freedom. It knows only of obligations on others.

Freedom is based, however, on the Germanic ideas of the family and of the state, two circles of the connection between rights and duties, which can only be conceived together, as a living whole. They may be called private and public law: their connection is that the family secures the continuation of this life through children, but the state protects it politically and economically. This results in the necessary and natural principles of German law. Since history has not created it for us, we must create the knowledge of it today. In the following, the attempt is made to suggest the basic features in a few words.

After that, the law establishes the order of relationships of actual life. The bearer of this order for us is the free human will - not philosophically proven free but legally treated as free – which can be guided by actions, situations, creations or an outer will. In relation to this, there are not physical persons and physical things in the sense of Roman law, but starting points and goals - subjects and objects - of this work. The starting points that are subjects of an act of free will, are the individual, the family, the state, the recognised association, and most recently the nation, representing of the sovereign rights of each. The objectives are those of honour, freedom, security, and property. Property is not a thing, but for us a property is in relation to a will, which can express thoughts and relationships as well as bodies. The concept of intellectual property

was completely foreign to the Romans.[33]

Every right corresponds to a duty. A duty on the individual, the family, the federation, the nation - is a right insofar as one does not receive it, but gives it. The undertaking of the right gives the claim to the duty of the other. Doing an injustice overrides this relationship between rights and duties.

The essence of punishment is therefore based on the fact that every breach of duty is followed by a restricting of rights, namely that of honour, freedom and property. Therefore, civil and criminal law should be built similarly. They define what is right and wrong, establishing and securing the same conditions. In the laws of Germany they are worlds apart. The one book is imitated by the institutions and *pandects*[34] up to today, with an absolutely impossible distribution of obligations on property and bond law; the other, for which there was no Latin model, is laborious and compiled without the idea of a deeper order. Accordingly, there is repeatedly a conflicting practice in court proceedings, depending on whether the judges are accustomed to think as Romanists or as criminologists.

English law is deeply penetrated by the relationship between *rights* and *wrongs,* as well as by their division into private or public law and justice. A future German law should determine from the same Germanic basic feeling when the individual will contradicts the general will, i.e. the relationship between the private will and the public interest, and furthermore, when the punishment, as said before, should restrict rights as a result of the violation of duties, and should be imposed by the general instead of the individual will. In England, which knows only society instead of the state, public justice is at least followed in the form of private prosecution. There is no public prosecutor. In Germany, however, the total will of the nation rests in the state, and a deeper conception of this fact should demand what is quite remote from Roman thought, that every individual is obliged to report crimes not only against individuals but also against the nation, without consideration of his personal relationship to the offender, and that the violation of this duty by silence, would result in the severe reduction of one’s honour, freedom and property. The general duty of disclosure, including the liability of the seller for the legitimate origin of goods sold, would reduce the number of crimes infinitely. Every offender is noticed by

someone. Current law sometimes rewards informants, but it does not treat the matter as a moral duty. As a result, there is a wide flaw, while it would have been possible to develop the individual's legal consciousness to the extent that he should feel being part of the process when having knowledge of a criminal act and with the feeling of associated responsibility.

And yet in another way, the slave spirit shows the soullessness of rights in relation to the Germanic world-feeling. It denies the man his claim to be free, his honour, security and property and that of his people and his country, and the ability to protect these with all means at his disposal. It hides the non-recognition of personal pride, of national pride, of the sense of honour, self-esteem and the inner independence of the individual behind the pitiful notion of self-defence. "An act of self-defence is not unlawful", it says in the civil code, but it has an undertone according to which even this is undesirable and always suspected of transgression. From this point of view, the criminal perpetrator and the defensive victim are equally mere objects of jurisprudence.

But the criminal should be without rights in committing the crime and fleeing. An injustice cannot be committed against the one who is doing wrong. It is only with the arrest that the state assumes the further exercise of public law: that is the tacit basis of the Germanic conception, which is so self-evident in England and America, where Norman law has shaped practical custom. And the free man should also be allowed to act in the name of the state. Anyone who forcibly invades property in order to destroy or steal something should be outlawed. Anyone who is called upon for help by a third party in cases of grave danger to life and property can use whatever means he thinks fit. And the same should apply to attacks against the security of the nation, such as that of treason, espionage or association with the enemy. The criminal would know under what conditions he acts, and - *volenti non fit injuria*.[35]

Honour should stand at the head of the law for a dignity-conscious people. It is the dearest thing an individual, man or woman, a family, a state, a nation has to lose and defend. Who does not feel that, is already honourless. Whoever tolerates a violation of honour, whether personal or that of his state and people, has none to lose. A legal book, which does not allow the personal protection of honour, sees the meaning of life in material conditions and thus

lacks inner dignity.

But there is another type of honour besides the personal. An honourable basic trait is even more indispensable to the commercial life of a whole people than to the individual merchants' house, where from time immemorial dishonourable management resulted in the breaking off of personal relationships. The emergence of financial assets not bound to a place and that are not undertaken in productive enterprises, or only partly in them, and the reorganisation of property in recent years as a result of war, revolution, and inflation has resulted in a terrible decline in economic life and the ruthless pursuit of profit without tradition, without honour, even without fear of imprisonment.[36] For this very reason, dishonourable acts such as fraud, usury, extortion, bribery, falsification of documents, should incur the toughest fines and imprisonment, and should result in the exclusion of the offender from everything that requires trust: from the stock market, from seats on boards and directorates, furthermore the non-recognition of his signature, his prohibition from issuing bills of exchange and checks, and, in some circumstances, the declaration of his prohibition from conducting commercial transactions, with permanent police supervision.

Freedom and security can be of a private nature: right and wrong in relation to the individual and the family, or of a public nature: protection from endangerment of life within the state and the economy. Firstly, the sanctity of the house includes that part of the living space of the nation in which the individual will is completely free and should be protected from any interference. Only the criminal loses this fundamental right of Nordic peoples living in protected spaces. It also includes the protection of life from deprivation of liberty, murder, assault and moral offenses. The second is the marriage law, in which the Germanic idea of the family is reflected, including the rights of the children and, on the other hand, the violation of this idea in adultery. The freedom and security of the state include press laws, censorship and protection against betrayal; the right to work for one's own will, that is to say the right to refuse to work if it does not break a contract, and the right not to participate in it, even for business leaders where the refusal is called plant closure. Roman-materialistic law actually knows only "work" as what has been achieved, a quasi-material

quantum, a mere thing. But it should depend on work as the operation of a will and as a source of achievement. A future labour law and also a commercial law would have to be clearly based on the fact of free will and not on the existence of its material result. That is the Germanic, the other is the Roman point of view.

The right of inheritance should be at the forefront of the right to property. The Germanic concept of property cannot be separated from the Germanic idea of family, and if one designates property as that which is exclusively subject to one's own will - not just "things" as in Roman law and our common law, but also all goals, means and results of volitional acts, business, technical, artistic, organisational ideas and abilities – are also part of the Germanic idea of hereditable property. The will to be protected is that which links property through marriage and children to inheritance law. Theft in the broadest sense, as an injustice against property, should include not only fraud and usury, but also the misuse and the appropriation of inventions, thoughts, motives and intentions.[37]

Finally, as regards penalties - I repeat: the curtailment of rights as a result of breaches of duties - they must, as such, be real punishments. Reduction of property by fines, if fair, should not be given in fixed amounts, but as a percentage of income or possessions; they must therefore be imposed by the judge, but must be carried out by the tax authority. For the same reason imprisonment must not only be humiliating, but also a deterrent. Mere confinement, which often goes beyond the standard of living of the middle classes, is in some circles no longer perceived as a punishment. Long and hard work, simplification of food and solitary confinement should be regular additional penalties.

5. The German Currency

Spengler addresses the crisis of currency and reparations which he relates to the control of Germany's economic policy by foreign financiers. The differences of "money" and "credit" are defined, and that of productive, attached property and rootless, speculative international capital. He discusses at length the Dawes Plan, which placed Germany under foreign financial control in order to resolve ultimately British and French war loans from Wall Street. Hence, Germany's resources were brought under the control of foreign finance in order that the war loans of Britain and France to the USA (Wall Street) could be "serviced," while Wall Street received further dividends by floating the loans to Germany. Spengler compares the situation in Germany with that of France during the chaos of the Revolutionary era, and points out that ultimately this is a question not of economics *per se*, but of whether a state has small or great leaders. The lesson is that economics, so far from determining politics, should always be subjected to politics and High Policy, and ultimately under resolute statesmanship.

- § -

Although the *Rentenmarkfriede*[38] will make it seem superfluous to many today to think seriously about questions of the currency, it seems to me necessary to review the history of the death struggle of the German mark, because the *Rentenmark* was intended from the beginning as an interim solution, nothing else, and the solution of the unresolvable reparations question will put the problem of our future currency to the test, in the most serious form.

The history of *Papiermark* cannot be separated from that of the parliamentarism of our directorate. The ignorance of its leading representatives, the materialism by which the currency was perceived as a technical problem, the cowardice and insincerity of the measures, or the lack of such measures, caused the drive to frightening conditions, then to intervene in sudden anxiety without

first realising the deeper meaning of the disaster. As a result of the years of lack of real value and a trustworthy means of payment, the economy became so confused that government was unable to give the enemy powers or itself a proper picture of the situation. The apparent picture, expressed for example in the fantastic, but baseless dividend rates, enabled foreign countries to frightfully deceive us about our ability to pay reparations, about the boundless impoverishment, and that of internal consumption and production. The productive economy is so underdeveloped today that it would not be able to withstand any new currency experiments. From about 1920 on, buying and selling against money had the character of fraud, and yet industry and agriculture were sinking. The government had condemned the *Papiermark* to death in the name of a deteriorated gold-mark, that is, its own currency, at the moment when it gave permission to issue the first "fixed-value" loan, which by its very nature gave up the old measure of value and nobody noticed the connection, let alone worked for the necessity of a quick replacement. The currency continued to be treated as a second-tier issue, the solution of which was postponed until the repercussions and beyond.

Already in the summer of 1923 I had warned that the currency question was the most urgent of all. I foresaw that the Government would perish at the collapse of the currency, and through the shattering of the internal situation, which became psychologically untenable through daily anxious and provocative arithmetic with the constantly growing giant figures.[39] Instead of looking at the need for extra work, which has happened since calculation with *Rentenmark*, it screamed in haphazard horror for a reduction in the already cheapest prices in the world. When calculating with more than three-digit numbers, it is impossible for most people, even the educated, to survey their small household and to estimate the prices correctly. As foreign countries bought us in, the domestic market swayed between nervous economy and rushed spending. Housing bolshevism, that is, the compulsory fixing of penny rents, which did not permit the slightest repair, left the housing stock, one of the most valuable remnants of our national wealth, to decay. This shut down the construction industry, which at times had fed nearly a tenth of the working-class population with the related industries before the war, and could now almost have prevented unemployment. Instead, the finances were burdened further by the

loss of taxes on these trades and homeowners. The result was the ever more reckless clash of people and the abolition of the sanctity of their own homes; their external reduction to squalor, hate, vulgarity and dullness, and so also their internal culture. All this seemed worse than a second war. What has perished psychologically and objectively in these months cannot be foreseen today.

Added to this was the crime of the foreign exchange policy with which one sought to cover up the consequences of the death of the *Mark* like a child hiding the broken cup. As long as there was a mix of foreign exchange and paper marks in payment transactions, and at least the exchange was seen as a possibility, some of the trust remained. It was not until they were artificially separated that an absolutely valuable money, which was driven into the corners, opposed an absolutely worthless one. The existing means of payment were all objects of daily gambling and thus definitively lost the ability to measure values. Forex trading, which now flourished, poisoned the entire trade in goods. The value of the mark was now reduced to microscopic amounts until under the cabinet of Stresemann there was the glorious final curve of the million to the trillion: a world record of devaluation, which is expected never to be surpassed.[40] The conclusion of this tactic was the official misuse of the Berlin dollar exchange rate, which, in view of the Index of the cost of living, was arbitrarily moved against the foreign exchange rate in order to keep the price numbers low, but which, for weeks, made it the object of new speculation.

In the meantime, when the state failed, public opinion was scarcely conscious, and the catchword was that of stable value, which became a fixed idea, and finally led to the doubling of potash, coal, grain, and electricity prices. But the intervention of private circles led to the Helfferich Plan for a currency based on grain. Even today, the fundamental idea itself has hardly been clearly recognised, perhaps not even by its authors. It is the abandonment of the state to the creation of the means of payment by the private sector. The credit of the German economy and the trust in their honesty and efficiency replaced the no longer existing credit of the parliamentary government. Germany today is the only country in the world that has a purely private currency. The annuity coupons are instructions on immovable productive

ownership and therefore not formally similar to a bill of exchange but to a mortgage.

However, the introduction of the new means of payment was a twofold task: to get the idea right and, in the terrible mistrust of all state-supported currency experiments, to conduct the transfer tactically. This second and more difficult, at first almost hopeless task, which presupposed a skilled acrobat, has been handled by Dr. Schacht surprisingly safely. But he is still struggling against a new danger: the decommissioning of the printing press has blocked the state's important source of income and it was anticipated that he would have to try to somehow find a substitute. Now every currency is in a state, even if it is not the currency of the country, and it was all the more susceptible to encroachments by foreign credit. This danger is only seemingly eliminated by the powers of the Monetary Commissioner. In certain cases he has to decide whether he should give priority to the state budget or the technical safety of the currency. It might be that it was possible to have the *Rentenmark* guaranteed by an Anglo-American banking group, with the transfer of mortgage security: then a very effective right to object to covert interventions in the currency situation would exist. There are several types of inflation, for example, by discounting treasury bills denominated in bonds, by private banks, or by forging metal money without metal value, which makes use of the *Rentenmark* loan. The value of a mortgage depends on the performance of what is mortgaged. If the tax laws destroy the yield, then the value of what is mortgaged has become questionable. The taxes themselves are short-term mortgages with immediate notice, which are always priority, since they have to be paid out.

Here one has to make clear the relationship between currency and "money." "Money" is a mere quantum of value that one imagines by refraining from the material nature of the commodity and the means of payment in a business.[41] Thus, it is expressed by a simple number, and a *Mark* is the standard by which the figure is determined.[42] Today, when a businessman trades a used machine for commodities, he abstracts from the objects the value that he measures and compares with the *Mark*. This habit of "thinking in terms of money" does not at all demand that there be a means of payment in the movement of goods which contains the measured value as material value. The metal weights, which we call coins,

have been increasingly replaced by certificates (banknotes) and these are replaced in cashless payments, and are therefore completely unnecessary.[43] The confidence which makes this written circulation of values possible rests solely on the fact that the measure of value is a fixed quantity, and this is repeatedly called into question by the fact that the production of means of payment does not take place on the demand,[44] but forms a source of revenue.[45]

In ancient Egypt, in spite of the highly developed credit system, there was no means of payment whatsoever, but only fixed, written balance figures so that the concept of a currency crisis is unthinkable. For us, however, the relationship between currency and politics is more important than that between the currency and the economy. Between the buyer and the seller, the means of payment is a transitional and normal commodity of a special kind, the production of which is a prerogative of governments everywhere, and whose amount depends on the needs of the state. If this becomes excessive, one speaks of inflation. The original form is the deterioration of coins, which was sometimes driven by countries in need of money to the extent that silver coins barely contained any traces of silver. There was also a deterioration and faking of goods that the manufacturer forced the buyer to accept as unaffected.[46]

Here now a great change occurs with the last decade of the 18th century, when there is a rapid pervasive replacement of movable assets and productive values by means of the stock market. Both shares and banknotes can now move from hand to hand among anonymous owners. This turns the means of payment from a bill of exchange to a commodity, which is listed by Treasury as actually or supposedly being present somewhere. But in the case of paper money, the issuance of the bill by the state is always an open source of revenue, the redemption indefinitely adjourned, and the issuer assumed to operate in good faith and not subject to outside judgement. Since these bills can be made indefinitely- quite differently than lower valued coins - and since the measure of value is both attached to them and represented by them, the currency is subject to the fluctuations of the exchange rate. The monetary policy of non-creditable countries was thus essentially to keep the exchange rate stable, without removing the cause of its decline,

which at first was the excessive production of bills.[47]

Since it is a materialistic conception of the problem that is prevalent today, the “gold standard” recommended since Adam Smith as the panacea must be examined for its true significance. A gold standard in the sense generally assumed today does not exist at all. The circulation of banknotes should be covered by a gold reserve - but the word cover has a double meaning. Today one understands this supposed gold backing as a factual security. But a country is also in a position to back its paper money with anything at all, and gold can be replaced by commodities, a mortgage, or finally the government’s declaration of surety. If that is not enough then a gold reserve will not be able to secure the value of a currency. If a currency is backed only by property, the *Assignaten* of the French and the *Papiermark* of the German revolution were the two best backed paper currencies in the world. But before the war, the Russian government did not succeed in keeping the paper rouble on the gold standard, despite one of the largest gold reserves in the world, and conversely no one would doubt that the pound note would not have dropped by a penny, if the English government had by law given up the much smaller gold reserve and replaced it with a guarantee. Here a property backed currency makes trust in a currency superfluous. No country is so poor that it could not secure its paper money circulation for its national wealth. But it is a question of how the government will operate with a property backed currency because there is not authority over government either to cover up the consequences of a miserable financial system or to pursue political goals or for lack of courage to pursue unpopular measures. The moral backing for the *assignats* was borne by the Jacobins and the Directorate, by the Socialists and by the party cliques associated with them. The course of both paper currencies was based on the public trust in the value of the currencies. In Germany, these circles, with the introduction of the *Rentenmark* as a private currency, have refrained from continuing to put their own moral credit to the test. In France they dared, until their fall by Napoleon.[48]

From 27 July 1793 the French government closed the stock exchange and enacted a foreign exchange regulation, which meant the seizure of coins, foreign currencies, and precious metals, and the prohibition of trade with them. But these measures were to no

effect. Then there were rushed austerity measures; from 1795 the dismantling of the civil service which had become overloaded with Jacobins. Then, as a result of the growing devaluation of money, the proposal of a currency bank, originating from the circles of industry and commerce, based on the credit of private currency built up in the economy. This was rejected in March 1796 on the ground that it undermined the authority of the state, that is, of the governing party.

For the same reason, the proposal for a wheat currency coincided at the same time. For this, the limited solutions of the revolutionaries with the customary disregard for the property of others was repeatedly brought out: the compulsory economy introduced on July 26, 1793, with the official fixing of prices, vain punishments, the queuing of the City population in front of empty bakeries - all this to the great applause of the financial people who made a brilliant contribution to it. Suppliers and companies sprang up everywhere, connecting with the Jacobins in influential places that wanted to get rich. This was followed by the introduction of a new currency backed with the Swiss franc, which immediately disappeared from circulation; then the closure of the printing press in February 1796; the issuing of *rescriptions*, sort of bills of exchange to meet the government's most urgent need for money, and the replacement by *assignats* covered by confiscated goods from the nobility and the church.

However, in the midst of this second terrible period of the revolution, there was no degree of public trust and this was expressed in the fact that in contrast to the *Rentenmark*, what was a pure state currency in the first week, in three months fell to nothing. Wide areas of France resorted to barter. From then on there was only one means of raising confidence in the currency, namely, the abdication of the Jacobins and their allies, and Napoleon finally took it over.

The collapse of the German currency, in the summer of 1922 and in the fall of 1923, would have continued with the Conference of Experts and its outcome, had it not been deprived of symbolic expression by the abolition of the national currency.[49]

When the private pension market had found confidence as an interim solution, the general opinion was that it was only about the

transition to a new state currency. In the meantime, the clear end goal was increasingly being obscured from public attention by a confusing series of banking projects. In addition to banks, the *Golddiskontbank* arose.[50] The question was that of reparations to Paris. The fact is that the private currency was not to be replaced by a national currency, but by one of foreign and hostile states in an entirely non-binding form, so that the Sword of Damocles is constantly hanging the threat of a currency crisis over the German people, which cannot meet the reparations payments.[51]

Negotiations conducted by Morgan Trust directors,[52] as representatives of America,[53] involved German experts. Who sent them? Were they privy to the intentions of Paris and those of Morgan? Did they influence it? Was there an influence of certain non-official circles? It should not be forgotten that the entry of foreign experts in Berlin was welcomed by our financial and French press as well as by the war victors. Then came the noisy optimism in official statements, but also the increasing secrecy of what was no secret in Paris. Did the German officials not know anything? Did they know it without being able to stop it, or did they not want to hinder it? Finally the result came to light. It was hastily published without the most incriminating parts, received by the inaugurated press with emphatic approval, and the approval thus obtained of the German people, which in reality had no idea of the scope of the provisions. In any other country the State Tribunal would find an opportunity to clarify these events. Have the responsible parties cooperated in the result? In which direction? With what success? If unsuccessful, what justifies the silence? And if without foreseeing the results and their consequences - when do those of the responsible offices begin to hold themselves accountable in spite of obvious lack of aptitude and constant failures?[54]

The fact is that the entire possession of the Reich is handed over. The main sources of revenue that oppress the impoverished economy do not even cover necessary government expenditures. Productive immovable possessions, above all industry, is handed over. Agriculture has, without doubt, been treated more cautiously, only out of consideration for the mood of the rural electorate, all to the delight of movable German and foreign finance capital. With the evaluation of this enormous pawning of Germany the possibility of huge profits can be seen. What influence did these financial

circles and Morgan have on the negotiations? To what extent had people agreed in advance on linking pledges to international credit operations? Finally, the *Reichsbank*, founded by Frederick the Great, the old Prussian State Bank, with the inclusion of the *Renten-und Golddiskontbank*, is to become a reparations bank for foreign trusts working in Germany, which has credit and currency completely in its hands.

All this takes place as the last act of foreign policy of a Party coup, whose right-wing side ends what the left had begun in Versailles: the sale of a whole people into slavery, after having been mentally disarmed by a mismanagement of five years and by being deceived by the noise of party politics.

Thus, if the rule of this clique does not end now, the question of the German currency would have become indifferent to us. The value measure for a sold commodity concerns only the buyer. But I put the case that finally there is now shame enough for the majority of the people, and that on the other hand, there is the boundless problem of agreement on the spoils. The situation is increasingly drawn into the great unsolved questions of the development of global political power. Therefore, the security and confidence in a future German currency depend only indirectly on the economic situation, namely an active trade balance, the inflow of foreign currency, the satisfaction of the capital needs of industry and agriculture, and tax revenue, while all this depends on big politics. If it fails, the economy collapses and the currency becomes a problem. If it fulfils its task, then both are already supported by it. Politics does not depend on institutions, but on personalities. And that's why in the end there is only the personal loan for the economy of a whole people as for every single company. And that is why every currency rests on the personal credit of the responsible minority of rulers. The *assignat* of France was fairly independent of military successes and the improvement or deterioration of the economic situation. Its downward curve was the result of two great events: the meeting of the Legislative Assembly, when it turned out that it contained only babblers, and no leaders, and the commencement of the Directory, whose material and moral qualities were correctly judged; and three sudden developments: temporarily in the fall of 1792, when Danton seized the dictatorship; in the spring of 1793 with the dictatorship of

Robespierre, and permanently in the fall of 1799 with Napoleon's coup d'etat.

6. Against Steuerbschewism[55]

Spengler continues to examine the differences between productive, fixed capital, and anonymous, rootless, parasitic capital. He regards the tax system as not only cumbersome, inefficient, costly, and bureaucratic, but one in which productive labour and capital are burdened, while speculative capital is able to avoid tax. The tax system confiscates rewards to the productive and creative, impoverishing this strata to the point where there will be one class of serfs, beholden to the rulers of high finance operating behind governments. This is in spirit and outcome “Bolshevism”, every bit as destructive to the stratum of society that conveys culture and creativity over generations as the murderous tactics of Bolshevism. Classical Liberals have succumbed no less to this spirit of Bolshevism in wanting to eliminate the creative and productive strata of society, as seen in the inheritance taxes of Britain, and elsewhere. Party politicians, including those of the Right, will not tackle the problem, because in democratic fashion, they are subjected to the whims of the electoral mass, whose views are shaped by a press that is controlled by financial interests, where long-term goals and actual statesmanship are disparaged, while on the other hand, propagandised with the politics of envy by the Left.

- § -

Tax is almost the only area to which a higher view is never ventured. It seems that the usual view is that tax is only a question of monetary receipts withdrawn from business life, no matter how and where. The science of finance is limited to this process - and yet there is a philosophy of taxation; you just have to know it.

The problem has moral and factual sides. As long as one treats it exclusively as a task of an office or as party-political tactics, that is, only considers the amount of the tax needed or the choice of the victim to be taxed, the question is treated in a too limited manner. Economic life and sense of duty are disregarded equally and finally

the practical purpose is missed. In all countries of the world today, the net income of taxes is in no relation to the costs in the bitterness and the damage to economic and social life.

Taxes are the amount by which the individual's standard of living is reduced in order to gain the livelihood of the whole. The more tasks for the protection of honour, security and property (rights), for the possibility of life (great politics, war), and the conditions of economic prosperity (order) the greater is the role demanded of the individual household. The *Weltanschauung* decides to what extent such tasks must or should be solved together as parts of the whole community. In England there has always been a tendency to leave as little as possible, in Germany as much as possible, to the care of the individual, which is connected with the fate of both the German and English peoples, their situations, and their traditions.

In any case, the state relies on the whole community to pay the costs of its activity, unless it owns its own assets. And it is part of the sense of duty, and the commercial honesty of the members of this community, to pay the owed amount without being at the expense of others. Taxes have always been regarded as a burden, because they were imposed and levied in such a way that the individual attitude of life and the entire economic life were pushed to the point of destroying entire branches of industry, by which time the burden had to be increased. It is in the financial and legal systems that there is a class of experts and civil servants, who do not know practical economic life from their own experience. They misunderstand the meaning of state sovereignty, their thinking only concerned with their departmental point of view: to secure the receipt of a certain amount without thinking of or assuming responsibility for the economic consequences, because that is the business of another ministry. Moreover, we have a scholarly science of finance, which, like jurisprudence, originates from literature and produces literature, without going beyond formal viewpoints of classification, methods and purposes.

The ministry's position now faces the envy and vengeance of the political parties, which chose taxes in keeping with the democratic age and approved the growing need to impose burdens on the political-economic adversary; the successful, the owner, the frugal. The privileged estates of the eighteenth century had been content to

ward them off. However, now you can draw a lot of blood from a living body without harming it. It depends on how and where the deprivation takes place. But today there is no country in which the tax laws are created by experts of economic life, rather than officials and parties, in order to obtain as high a net income as possible, without seriously damaging the economic body. There were other reasons that did not come from the economy itself. Above all, the lack of courage to implement unpopular measures. “Just distribution of burdens” is a fine phrase, but it is to be wondered to what extent one should let a people pay for the satisfaction of such feelings with the unnoticed extra burden elsewhere instead of clarifying to them the nature of the tax cycle. For the parties, however, there was nothing more advantageous than to hide the reality from the voters. The inheritance tax, for example, is nothing but a second wealth tax of bad method. You could make it safer by calculating the average age and distributing the amount over the appropriate number of years.

In reality, there are neither direct taxes nor luxury taxes in the popular sense. A car tax also hits the poor, a bread tax also the rich, namely by lowering or increasing wages and prices. Only the place of payment is different. An important side of economic life is that all burdens are distributed unnoticed by the supporting body. The means for this is on the one hand the wage formation, on the other hand the price formation. That pushes burdens from the bottom upwards, and from the top downwards. The real reward is not the amount paid, but its purchasing power, and the reduction of purchasing power is achieved through a wage deduction or through an increase in prices.

As long as the tax needs of the states were low, such as around 1880, the methods were expensive and cumbersome, but otherwise without practical consequences. Military spending grew under the influence of the approaching world war, for instance since 1890, and taxation policy developed into an economic war with parliamentary means, with armaments manufacturing supported by government. This and especially direct taxes, led to envy, exploited by the Left. New methods of passing taxes and of tax evasion and of the growing mass of civil servants continued the increase of the costs of tax collection.

The ideal of direct taxes based on responsibility and personally

paid by each fellow-citizen is so unconditional today that their justice and expediency seem self-evident. The criticism is directed against details, never against the principle itself. But nevertheless it does not come from practical consideration or experience, much less from a consideration of the preservation of economic life, but from the philosophy of Rousseau, based on the concept of innate human rights, and on the notion of the state as a free social contract. It is opposed to the fact of historically developed forms of government. As a result of this view, it appears to be the duty of the individual citizen, and it is part of his human dignity, to personally estimate and personally pay his share of the tax burdens of the whole community. From that moment forward, with modern policy, at first barely conscious, and then, with the increasing democratisation of public opinion, there arose an increasingly more definite worldview which gives way to feelings and political sentiments and ultimately completely excludes an ingenuous reflection on the appropriateness of the prevailing procedure.

Nevertheless, this situation was initially feasible. The structure of economic life at that time was such that individual incomes were all visible and easily verifiable. They came either from agriculture, or from an office, or from commerce, and everyone could look at the situation of the other. Greater, anonymous revenues, did not exist. At the same time, fortunes were all immovable and visible possessions: land, houses, businesses and institutions, and it was known who the owners were. But just at the end of the century, a revolution has taken place. This revolution was precisely that of Marx's doctrine, because it proceeds from secret envy and therefore sees only the surface of things, and has misrepresented the actual picture of the economy. The effect of its brilliant slogans was all the greater as it repressed judgements of experience for judgements of feeling. It was so great that even opponents did not escape it and the whole of modern labour legislation was based on the thoroughly Marxist basic notions about workers and employers - which means that they do not work. Since these slogans were directed at the working class of the big cities, the sudden rise of big industry toward the middle of the nineteenth century appeared within the doctrine as the decisive turn. But especially in the field of large technology, the development was very uniform. A machine industry already existed in the 18th century. But, contrary to this, the decisive factor is the rapidly increasing replacement of property as

a property of possessed things, through the interposition of the deed, the bond, the share. The individual asset becomes mobile, invisible and intangible. It no longer exists in visible things, but is only created in them and can at any moment change the location and type of installation. The owner of the plant became the owner of shares at the same time. The owners have lost all factual connection with the enterprise. They neither understand nor care about their achievements and tasks. They only pay attention to the profits. They can change quickly, be many or few, and be anywhere; the shares can gather in a few hands, disperse or go abroad. No one knows who an enterprise really belongs to. No owner knows the things he owns. He knows only the monetary value of this property based on the stock market price. It is not even known what is happening among the inhabitants of the country. For since there is an electrical intelligence service, which allows it to strip even the stock property by verbal order and to relocate to foreign parts of the earth, the domestic share in domestic plants can rise or fall by enormous amounts on a stock market in an hour, depending on whether foreigners sell or buy up stock packages, maybe only for one day. Today, more than half of the property has become movable in all economically advanced countries, and its changing owners are scattered all over the world and have lost all interest in the work done except the financial interest. The entrepreneur has become more and more the employee and object of these financial circles. All this is not recognisable in the works themselves and cannot be determined precisely by any tax method.

But this makes it impossible for tax liability if the holder of variable assets wants to avoid it. And the same is increasingly true of incomes. Freedom of movement, freedom of trade and the abolition of guilds make the individual independent of the control of his professional colleagues. Since railways, steamers, newspapers and telegrams have existed, communications has taken shape, freeing the buying and selling of space and time. Remote buying dominates the economy. The delivery and futures businesses outperform the ease of communication between producers and consumers. The local needs for which the guild worked are being replaced by the commodity exchange, which plays off the production, displacement and acquisition of things in order to obtain speculative gains. For the banks instead of the exchange transactions of the 18th century, in the 20th century, brokering

credit becomes the main source of profit, and speculation on the assets that have become mobile decide at the stock exchange from one day to the next, the amount of total national wealth. Thus also escape the business and speculative incomes of any official survey, and at last only the middle and small incomes remain, which, like wages and salaries, are so simple that it is not possible to be deceptive about their size.[56]

This is the great turn of the 1800s. Marx's socialism, in essence was the same as the perspective of a Liberal of 1789[57] who has had no success, looks at the state of 1848 and sees only what annoys him, and why it angers him. The entrepreneur is the object of all his indignity precisely because of his accomplishments, who often enough starts as a worker, and rises above the rest. Therefore, nothing is said about such achievements, and only the visible expression[58] of such success is painted on the wall.[59]

The generally visible consequence[60] was that the ideal of fiscal human dignity alone was not sufficient to secure the necessary revenue, and the nineteenth century thus presents the picture of a steadily growing army of tax officials, with a tremendous amount of money and paperwork to help the conscience of the self-assessing citizen, which presupposed democracy but did not find it. Napoleon reduced the number of tax officials from 200,000 to 6,000, and by a reasonable system he soon put the finances in order. During his reign he did not need to borrow a single loan.[61] But we are removing an increasing number of working people from productive labour that we need today more than ever before, to occupy them with the collection and settlement of inappropriate taxes, not only the countless people in the offices, but the same number in the economy itself, to carry out or even understand the more and more complicated and impossible regulations. In 1923 over a hundred million individual tax returns were drawn up in Germany, several hundred million individual payments made, and nearly a billion documents sent. In this way, almost half a million people have been deprived of real work, and with their salaries, material consumption, and operating costs, have consumed most of the revenue in advance, which is not universally apparent. The state budget avoids listing the net income of the taxes, and instead names the entrances, while the collection costs are charged elsewhere. This is especially true of the popular, "only fair," direct taxes whose net

income despite the expense of time, trouble, and economic damage, is disappearing, or exposing itself as a deficit in a more commercial than bureaucratic set-up of the budget. In order to meet these expenses, it is precisely the visible part of the income and wealth that is used excessively, because it has to bear the burden of invisibility, that is, of wages and salaries, small businesses, rents and savings.

It is high-level finance that popularly preserves the personal tax ideal with all its influence on the press and parties, because it puts a strain on the powers of working industry and agriculture which confront it in immovable possession. The self-assessment tax is a weapon which allows capital, invisible behind the banks and trusts, to swing through democracy, in order to transfer possessions into movable forms and thereby subordinate productive labour to the profit-making methods of speculation, so that neither the entrepreneur, the worker nor the technician benefits. Even the small saver, who owns a few shares, can at any moment become the victim of money-men and their policy, who quietly buy the majority of the shares, or reject them without anyone from the outside being able to identify them.[62]

So sinking tax and collection costs, which devour income, burden labour, and enable speculation, undermining immovable national assets in favour of homeless financial capital: to these long-existing consequences of the ruling tax ideal now occur the consequences that with the war the tax needs of all states has grown beyond measure. The debt is enormous, the economy falters, companies are shaken by the impoverishment of the old entrepreneurial stratum, and the penetration of a mass of the newly rich of dubious origin and morality. Internal politics is overloaded with tensions. Unless governments themselves have come under pressure, they must gain the freedom to make changes in this area. Nowhere would one dare to propose a tax that does not, according to popular belief, hit the “strong shoulders,” and in fact the successful, efficient, and frugal, or harm them the least, even if the practical result remains doubtful. We are in a time of pronounced Steubenshevism which, without much attention, seeks to achieve what has been achieved in Russia by streams of blood: complete social redistribution, the dismantling of the old West European, refined in blood and spirit, saturated with high traditions, which forms Society, until at last

there is nothing left but a group of financiers who are the actual government, and a proletarian mass of slaves, both of whom lack the inner growth of Culture that has grown over the centuries, which they can neither receive nor impart.[63]

In England, the taxation policy of the left-wing radical Lloyd George, which was initiated in 1908, was quite openly directed against the aristocracy with its immovable and unprofitable landed property, i.e. the stratum which for centuries had been the offspring of high politics and was now slowed and crushed by inheritance taxes. In Holland, the tax laws imposed by the Radicals in 1918 have the character of a barely veiled seizure of the old, visible, honestly acquired business and family assets, which in particular will be consumed by inheritance regulations within 50 years. In Germany, the working economic body is overpowered by a myriad of mutually poisonous taxes torn as with knife cuts in order to squeeze out everywhere, regardless of the loss of blood, and while the victim twitches he forms an incomparable object for professional speculation. What is meant by the terms “apprehension of material assets” and “interventions in the substance” up to the highest places is quite clear: the consumption of the immovable national goods, together with the stratum of middle class and trained intelligence attached to it. Of this fate only financial assets are free by speculative means.

That’s Bolshevism. It is hardly daring today to prove the consequences of this shift as disastrous, for the consequences were quite openly desired by radicalism, and are at least not regarded as misfortune by doctrinaire democracy. It is the bloodless social revolution which the bourgeois ministers do not achieve with beheading, but with money, covert expropriation with the tax bill, the emigration of the upper stratum, not from the land, but from the estate. The envy is absolute, the will, the industrious, the aspiring, the leader natures are thereby burdened to destruction. As a result of the revolution we Germans have more secret confiscation taxes than other peoples, partly from incompetence and cowardice in front of the voters, partly out of the evil will of the responsible parties. First, inflation, a dreadful tax that devoured all the small savings and pensions of the middle class, the hard-won and honestly invested fortunes of the higher estates, and the parts of the income that the individual did not immediately squander. Then the tax on

unpaid rents, which impoverished home ownership, again a valuable part of the middle class, and forced the dumping of the houses to speculators and foreigners, put an end to construction, increased unemployment and with it the loss of taxes and income by having to support the unemployed with vast sums. It was swallowed up by the fact that market devaluation had taken off at an even faster pace, and that replacement had to be sought again by burdening visible incomes and wealth in the form of taxes and diminished purchasing power: in fact, it was the most expensive rent ever paid. Then wrong types of taxation, which forced the economy to give a considerable part of its thinking and spending on tax issues rather than production issues, switching or decommissioning industrial and agricultural holdings in order to avoid destruction by the consequences of an apparent increase in value.

The creeping effect of this condition is worse than war and revolution, even if it persists for only a few years. Even the richest country in the world would not endure it. But Germany is so poor and economically so sick that it needs liberation sooner than other countries. Here is an area where Germany should go with all its organisational power and spiritual energy, with one bold step to eliminate the senseless and unimaginative tax system, to build for the first time a system that proceeds with full consciousness from the inner form of economic life, and does not paralyze it, and through judicious interventions in the right place stimulates greater production. If the design and implementation succeed, Germany would become exemplary in a few years and be imitated by the whole world. If he fails, our economy is lost.

The solution to this problem is relatively easy, as soon as one has understood it and has the courage to make it public. The resistance would be great in the beginning. In the end, everyone would be surprised that the self-evident took so long to prevail. The tax, then, should be understood as the deduction of value from the living flow of the economy, and it would be important to go to the places where the intervention can be made properly and without injury. For the individual this is expressed in a narrowing of his small private economy, which is not carried out by him through personal payment, but takes place from the outside as a matter of course, and it does not matter whether the revenue is reduced or the

expenses are increased. The last option is preferable because it costs less. The individual carries the tax, but he does not pay it. Self-assessment, which forces only a small portion of taxpayers, and especially not the richest ones, to be honest, is replaced by the public appraisal of visible value. Apparent injustice is automatically compensated by wages, so that the net wage is restored to the level required by the economic situation. Today, every honest taxpayer loses one-tenth of the purchasing power of their income for the maintenance of tax officials. The entire tax requirement would therefore be covered by very few large taxes. Firstly, by the property use tax and wage tax proposed by Rabbethge[64] : in so far as they form a unity, those enterprises with small numbers of workers and high efficiency such as the optical workshops, there would be lesser effect as on the mines and steel works.

First, all visible things are subject to yield or supply, i.e. they have an average sales value such as factories, land, forests, buildings, shops, workshops and tools, but not the raw materials and inventories themselves. The tax is not on the actual or fake specifics given by self-assessment, but on the average yield of what is possible with good management. It involves the shareholder, including the foreigner, in the form of smaller dividends and lower prices, and it provides a strong incentive for a better and higher performance, because this does not increase according to its intrinsic value through more intensive exploitation. Since all capital is somehow invested in productive work there, it can be, but only in the enterprise and not in the safekeeping of the owners or shareholders. The payroll tax, which is also to be paid by the companies, is a supplement and likewise does not offer any possibility of evasion, since no wage earner has an interest in it and the amount is not a secret.

I consider next as the most important of all excise taxes a residential tax that is appropriate and justified, known as the rental price, in all living spaces, graded according to their airspace, location, facilities, horticulture, environment and accessories (garages, garden sheds, lounges), reduced in proportion to the number of inhabitants, that is paid by the owners and extends to inns, so that tourists and luxury travellers are also subject to it.

In addition, the excise taxes on tobacco and alcohol remain, including a capital gains tax, which in conjunction with a stock

corporation, the movable, i.e. non-work assets are charged with a surcharge. The income, labour, sales, inheritance, wealth, and capital gains taxes, along with the tremendous apparatus for collecting them from each individual, the tremendous cost, and the easy ways of evasion, are gone altogether. The individual does not have to estimate or pay his tax. He only notices anything of it at all with the shortening of his net income. The savings in this way would amount to a doubling of the yield of all existing taxes; the economy would be free and could dispense with unprofitable measures; the individual would be free from feeling the burdening of others, and the torment of incessant paperwork. Without reform one large country after the other under the current tax pressure will fall into the slavery of high finance, in whose favour only the existing systems work.

7. Work and Property

Ownership of property incurs great duties, which must be carefully maintained by the state. The differences between speculative capital, whose owners are anonymous and impersonal, and those of entrepreneurs, workers and technicians who have a personal and identifiable interest in a work. The impersonality of both corporate stockholder ownership and of bureaucratic administration under state socialism. The aim must be to create an aristocracy of labour, from among the workers, and industrial organisations of workers who are involved in the works. This is a further elaboration of what Spengler called "Prussian socialism," and what others of the Right such as Gregor and Otto Strasser called "German socialism". As Spengler here points out, Karl Marx did not address the real issue of speculative capital, but formulated a theory of envy that was directed against creative ownership, and the ability of workers to rise in a hierarchy of merit. Such options were regarded as "reactionism" by Marx, because they interfered with what he considered to be inexorable historical laws leading to Communism. In the USSR however, classical Marxism was soon dispensed with, and efforts were made to create an aristocracy of labour, including honouring as much as with any knighthood, those workers who showed exceptional abilities.

- § -

In the current economic world, industry is the most important element. Since it had increased manpower to an unlimited extent through the use of natural forces to perform work, it was able to obtain a stronger population in the areas concerned than was previously possible for agriculture and craft. But as industry expanded to operate its machines, more and more human labour was needed, and there was the development of modern hygiene. This has led to tremendous population growth of the last ו· years. It is a product of machine and makes people dependent on it. Hence the fear in the major industrialised countries of securing the supply

of raw materials and sales areas for their businesses. It concerns the life and death of entire populations. Hence the feeling of the industrial worker being the decisive power. In fact, its very existence depends on the viability of its industry, and on it depends the existence of all human beings beyond the population of 1800 in Western Europe and North America.

It was a misfortune that the industrial workers, certainly not by their fault, succumbed to a political movement whose convincing slogans still completely determine their world-view. They did not learn to see themselves as parts, but as the goal and culmination of economic history, misjudging all the driving forces of history. If it is true that industry is the decisive factor - and Marx is undoubtedly right in that - it is the machine itself and not the worker.

Besides the worker, there is still the technician who has created industry as a spiritual greatness by turning knowledge of nature into power over nature and science,[65] which forced them to construct their views from the outset as working hypotheses, so that every new law was at once a lever in the image of the outside world. Then the entrepreneur came to create an economic creature out of the technical process. The worker found him, was appointed by him and lived by him. It is true that he can "let all the wheels go," but he cannot keep them alone. Nor is he the only one who works, as Marxism hammered into all the workers' heads. On the contrary, technicians and entrepreneurs work more intensely, more responsibly, and more effectively.[66]

There is organisational work and executive work. Industry arises only when both come together. They cannot be separated because each one stops without the second one. Opposite them stands profit-making of speculation, which produces nothing, but feeds on production.[67]

In industry the worker has suffered a strong depersonalisation from its early days. In the eighteenth century, the scientific horizon suddenly abated and technology emerged in outline. What was worked then was extremely crude, simple, uniform and mechanical compared to today. Today the big lines are fixed and the work is aimed at the refinement and deepening of the separate areas. Instead of the steam engine, there are extremely complicated special machines. Every modern industry is governed by specialised

methods, which break up into a large number of individual tasks, each of which requires a high degree of intelligence, training, and personal ability. The democratic direction, which dissolved the guilds and trades in the eighteenth century,[68] and drove undifferentiated masses into the factories, is now slowly turning into an aristocratic one, which distinguishes among the masses of workers a class of experts and superior minds with the highest areas of scientific technology. This aristocratic move goes equally through politics and economics, with necessity, since both sides are parts of the same. There, they lead to the dissolution of parliamentary states, elsewhere to the formation of a layer of high-ranking workers, which, however, contradicts everything that Marxist theory had predicted as a result of development and what it might need for the party.[69] Nowhere is the struggle against this general development as bitter as it is here, for socialism as a political fact, as a party program, is at stake.

It was one of Bebel's tirelessly pursued goals and is the greatest crime committed against the German working class, that personal achievement and rising within the economy was branded as a betrayal of the workers' cause. The Left was silent on half of the great industrial creators having been workers. Only one type of advancement was tolerated as a goal of ambition: the career of a secretary and Member of Parliament within the party.[70] The gifted man had to turn away from work if he wanted to gain the respect of the working class. It should be a closed caste in which all value judgements were reversed. There was emphatically no interest in the blossoming of industry, in new inventions, methods, organisational possibilities, in the development of new raw materials or trade territories.

It is one of the most important tasks of today's education of the people for the future, to lift this weight of cynical concepts from the people. The workers must be free from the mental pressure in the interest of a party that only sees them a useful material. The technique gives the worker today growing opportunities for the development of the free personality, for the conquest of a tremendous influence on the plant and development of factory procedures, for the education of an offspring of leaders from their own. Such ambition would have to be imbued into the working class, to create the consciousness of a real power, which lies

exclusively in intelligence and quality work. Leadership, and only that, makes a person irreplaceable and indispensable. And therefore, what must be ostracised in the public consciousness is the infamous method of the Social Democratic party that sacrifices the interests of the workers in favour of the goals of the paid party leadership. The wage system which punishes higher achievement, makes diligence suspect, regards quality work as betrayal, ridicules learning by maintaining the mechanical uniformity of 1800, and closes the eyes before the facts of what is now different, against improved knowledge. If Russia is to be talked about, it may serve as an example that the best skilled worker groups there receive two and three times the corresponding German wages, while the unskilled workers receive considerably less than German workers. What we need are groups of skilled workers of various sizes with self-organisation, on the Russian model, with strict selection of members and their own leadership, who negotiate with the plant managers about the extent of the work, the amount of wages and the intensity of work performance, while the interests of the group are upheld by observing the commitment by every single worker with all rigour.[71]

Although the work may be a commodity, as conceived by the materialism of ١٨٥٠,[72] it is also something more, a personal achievement. The entrepreneur works as a leader, too, but he does work of a higher type, and the gifted, hard-working and ambitious worker should look upon him with the feeling that his own ability opens the way to equal leadership. This outlook should come to dominate the young worker as a world view, as should the idea that the leadership of the working class belongs to the strong, the wise, the superior, within the working economy itself, and not to the swarm of paid officials of the Social Democratic party. The Social Democratic leadership of former journalists and lawyers, who have to live off the labour of the workers and, by cultivating irritable moods, maintain the indispensability of their posts.[73]

But on the other hand, over the life task of the entrepreneur should stand the sentence: the obligation of property. Property, the word conceived with all the moral seriousness of Germanic life, contains in itself also a kind of socialism, a Prussian, not an English imperative: proceed with your property as if entrusted to you by the people. Consider it an epitome of power relations that can create

work and happiness, in all directions, if used properly. If you want to use the slogan of the last century, there are two types of capitalists: the entrepreneur and the speculator. The first generates, the second exploits. One uses money as a resource, the other as the object of a game. When Marx lived, the stock market was already a power, but it was so close to his own instinct that he felt only entrepreneurs to be opponents. Expropriation of the expropriators, as Russian expropriation has shown, means the subjugation of the industrial leader, the "foreman" of the first rank, but there is also the type of professional labour leader who speculates with tactics always closely related to high finance.

The infringement of this obligation of property should bring about a corresponding reduction of rights. The laws that prevent the misuse of property cannot be strict enough. This should, above all, be a task of stock corporation law which, as far as possible, limits the exploitation of immovable works and goods by speculating, by making the bonds of every kind into forms permitting constant control.

In entrepreneurship itself, however, there is another danger which almost no one is aware of and which cannot be regarded as sufficiently questioned: in the early days of the works, each of which stood alone, the great talents were made visible early, freed up early, and placed early to responsible posts, so Siemens, Krupp, Borsig and a hundred others have risen. Since then, the increasing concentration of whole economic areas has led to the administration becoming bureaucratic, so that the talent in them become prematurely formal and difficult to identify and educate. The greatest danger of corporate formation is the destruction of an equal generation of junior staff and to that comes the profound inclination, even for Bismarck's work, to become self-reliant, to do everything by oneself, not to cultivate collaboration through a deputy or successor, so that the disadvantages of any planned economy and socialisation includes degeneration of the leadership class. The freedom of the economy has brought about the tremendous successes to which we owe Germany's prosperity and wealth before the war. The personal impact of personal abilities is what can cause shipping, trade and any other industry to go up or down. And this freedom is endangered by the corporations as well as by state compulsion. They both replace the free will of creative

personalities with a scheme. They both inhibit the rise of the fittest because working with the mediocrity is more convenient.[74]

Finally, one thing that is underestimated is that every major business enterprise is political. It may do as it pleases: from a certain point of view everything has a political side, and if one refrains in such a position from political action and thought, that too is an attitude with political consequences. However, the danger of economic talent is much less in underestimating politics than in confusing it with purely economic tasks. Economic policy can and has always been an essential part of big politics, but it is not a substitute for it. The economic life of today's people takes place in large bodies, which are formed by the political boundaries. So it is right to say that the existence of the States has an economic aspect. More correctly, the political side always remains decisive.

So it finally seems to me that these should be the great goals of the German economy: breeding a working class leadership stratum, from those suitable for the highest tasks of work; maintaining ambition in this direction; education of a young generation through free organisation of the structure of industry; conception of the ownership of productive goods as an obligation towards the nation, and a view of this duty as a part of high politics.

8. The World Situation

Much of Spengler's analysis concerns France, and the vehemence of Spengler as a German nationalist was no more than the hatred that the French maintained against Germany. France had emerged from the Great War holding the balance of the international economic system in its hands because of its intransigence towards extracting reparations from Germany, which caused an adverse impact across the world. Rather than repudiating the stubbornness of its ally, Britain and the USA appeased her, and the USA sought to remedy matters by plans that involved loans to Germany in order that reparations could be paid, so that Britain and France could in turn service their war loans to the USA. Such is the convoluted character of a parasitic financial system that continues to dominate the world. Spengler also addresses the coming rise of Asia and of Africa, and the implications of using colonial troops against Europeans. He sees Russia as having divested itself of both Marxism and Westernisation and as emerging as a great Eurasian power, while Islam might again assert itself. Land-power had replaced sea-power and the key to future geopolitical strategy would not be fleets, which hitherto gave England her pre-eminent world position, but the control of land masses and coasts. The revolutionary parties had been incorporated into the parliamentary system, but after the war a new era of revolutionary politics was emerging that would include politicised soldiers, and herald an era of strong leaders. Mussolini was a prelude of this era.

- § -

Germans are a people entirely turned off from world politics, whose political representatives believe they are able to escape the consequences of thinking it unnecessary to reflect on the world situation. And indeed the German citizen, insofar as he neither defends nor opposes Party points of view, regards politics as questions which refer to the provincial egoism of the *Lander* and the *Ländchen*.

Nevertheless, I do not see how we can arrive at a position that gives us again the rank and the freedom of action of an independent state, if we do not follow very attentively the course of world affairs, which drive with great unrest and growing tension towards unknown entanglements.

Even if it is forbidden to openly express certain possibilities, a look at the situation itself is useful, for it shows, even without intervention from any side, the emergence of such possibilities. The virtue of conquered peoples is patience, not resignation.

The fact is that the present world situation is completely dominated in politics by the unexpected rise of France to the absolute leading political power. England has taken a back seat as a result of the mistakes of their diplomacy. For the first time in centuries, the French have put to their service a superior tactic that skilfully switches between threat, persuasion and hesitation. American desires are rejected coolly. Others are not even heard.[75]

The French people, with their 39 million, marched last among the great nations. It has long been the poorest of births. It is very old in its mental state, very refined, very worn out. It has also become politically old. It has nurtured just one thought for fifty years: revenge for a lost war.[76] Other peoples have now organised colonial empires, built industries, created a world of social institutions. France, as a land of soldiers and retirees, remained uncreative in every sense. “We French will not conquer anything,” Zola said to a visitor in those years when, in the beatification of the Blessed Virgin of Orleans, a kind of military cult was created in Paris for the then-decided World War. And now? A people who was on the way to abdicate like the Spanish after glorious centuries; a nation saved only by Anglo-Saxon bayonets and billions in loans is playing with the fate of its saviours today. It completely forgot who enforced the victory. It is convinced that it has won by itself, and therefore claims the right to quite different achievements.

For France is the only country whose ruling circles are always first guided by ambition, the ambition of the *grande nation* awakened by Robespierre and Danton and trained by Napoleon. This tradition, which tolerates no contradiction either inside or outside, will always favour the brilliant glory of economic ascent, always the enjoyment of military triumphs of prudence, always a

brilliant moment of a less brilliant, but creative future. Being old, inwardly ill and exhausted by the blood loss that it cannot replace, the country has been in a hysterical and sadistic frenzy for five years. It is in France itself that one is wrong about the seriousness of the social and economic goals of French politicians, and perhaps they are fooling themselves. France is the only country in the world willing to face a severe civil war since the Battle of Marengo,[77] to secure the army's exercise of its external power. And this will-to-power is always a will-to-destroy. It is beyond the capabilities of the French character, even more outside the affections of French taste, to see conquered lands thrive economically, or to have friendship with previous opponents. The Frenchman is the bloodiest and at the same time most unsuccessful coloniser. From the wars of loot of Louis XIV, who without any major goals drew a desert belt along the eastern frontier, to the maltreatment of European peoples from Madrid to Moscow by the armies of Napoleon, upon which his empire finally perished, the expression of the French victorious sentiment has always remained the same.

Everything is old with them, the character, the *esprit*, the expression of the feeling of power, as well as the present goals of this power. The entire policy is with increasing clarity a resumption of Napoleonic plans. These 39 million want to be the masters of Europe and thus of the world, the other powers humbled, devastated, destroyed. What was still an indefinite urge in 1919 under the impression of unexpected success is today a plan pursued with all the clarity and energy of the French spirit. One sees with astonishment how the Rhine line is developed as a fortress, in front of which the *glacis*[78] is said to be the vacant field of Germany, while there are external fortifications for the Ruhr area access to the North Sea, the *Little Entente*,[79] the land bridge along the Danube to the Middle East, and the gigantic possession in North West Africa to secure the way to the Nile.

There is no doubt that Poincaré is the best old-style diplomat who is now in a leading position. But, as always in France, he and each of his successors are merely the executive organ of circles for which external success is the condition of remaining in office. Napoleon knew very well that the first step backwards on the path of military success would be the end of his reign. Therefore, since the withdrawal from Moscow, he was no longer able to enter into

serious peace negotiations, repeatedly tried in 1813 and 1814, which he admitted to Prince Metternich quite openly. For the same reason the Bourbons needed the war in Spain in 1823, the Orleans in 1833 in Algiers, Napoleon III in 1854 with the Crimean War, then in 1859 in Italy, in 1861 in Mexico, and since 1867 a war against Germany. Therefore, future elections, as long as they confirm today's policies, will result in a series of purely political wars, for the exploitation of foreign countries. This, too, corresponds to the practice of the Revolution and Napoleon.

Today, France leaves no doubt that in Germany it wants first and foremost not money, but power. The Ruhr area is a necessary stage on the old Napoleonic way. It is exactly where Napoleon founded the Grand Duchy of Berg in 1806, of whose military purposes he left no doubt. For in the following year northeast of the Kingdom of Westphalia, whose troops formed part of the French army, the German North Sea coast was finally incorporated into France in 1810. In the summer of 1923 French naval circles required the occupation of Bremen and Hamburg. Disarmed Germany has no means to prevent the sudden occupation of the North Sea ports and their being turned into completely invulnerable bases for French air squadrons and submarines. Thus the plan of the continental blockade of 1806, that is, the attempt to isolate the whole of Europe from England, could be resumed with better prospects. The distance from the Ruhr area to the North Sea can be covered by a modern convoy in one day.

In the south, the immense closed possession of France in North Africa is the new factor which Napoleon did not yet discover on his expedition to Egypt, and which today allows France to repeat its advance with quite different prospects. Here a new *fashoda*[80] is preparing for which England has no serious power to counter. In Africa, a Black army of a million is emerging, whose leaders in Paris may be susceptible to French money. There is no lack of hints that the government could and will rely on the Black troops in the event of a revolt in France. In Sudan, by giving civil rights to the Black people, France accustoms the Negro to the training and tactics of modern armies and at the same time teaches them to think beyond the limits of the power of a White population. General Mangin[81] spoke of this publicly - so loudly that it could be understood in Africa - that France militarily represented a nation not of forty, but

of a hundred million.[82] This army of Black French is today, as soon as she desires, the mistress of Africa. A network of strategic railways is to bring Niger and Congo to Morocco and Algiers. However, France, possessing Morocco, is able at any time to close the Mediterranean Sea with the occupation of Tangier, putting Italy in a very difficult position by cutting coal and food supplies.

And thirdly, the quite open attempts to dissolve West and South Germany into a number of dependent small states are also in keeping with Napoleon's idea: the creation of a land bridge along the Danube to the Orient. Thus the Mediterranean would be completely encircled from north and south, the Black Sea sealed off, and the Near East with its accesses put under French control. This goal is served by the slow transformation of southern European states, Yugoslavia, Romania and Czechoslovakia[83] into French protectorates. The granting of military credits, the training of armies by French officers, and the quiet penetration of French capital have already drawn a dense chain of French bases from the Baltic to the mouth of the Danube. This is the same staging area that Napoleon had organised for the march to Moscow. Even then, Poland was nothing but a French province.

And finally, the economic side: France today has 5.3 million tons of iron ore, England only 1, Germany only 0.77 million. Together with the Ruhr area, France commands 35 percent of coal production in Europe. Adding Belgium, Poland and Czechoslovakia, whose military control allows France to dispose freely of their economic resources, 60 per cent of European funding on the French side is equal to the English 25 per cent and the German 4 per cent. This puts France in possession of Europe's largest weaponry.

This is the situation of Europe in the "age of reparations" and it would be wrong to treat the question even now as simply a matter of reparations for war damage. With the sums that have been diverted from Germany under English pressure, France has expanded its air fleet, and conducts business in Italy, Spain, Belgium and Switzerland, which has allowed further arming and the granting of arms loans to the Balkans. Every new billion will mean new air squadrons, submarines and Negro regiments.

In contrast, England has become diplomatically uncertain and weak. A country with these global tasks does not go unpunished

with leaders like Lloyd George and Ramsay Macdonald. It shows again and again that popular assemblies and class parties are a very bad school for foreign policy. France owes its great successes to the fact that all the leading men went through the school of St. Petersburg in *Entente Cordiale*. Diplomacy is a craft of its own that should not be confused with war, economics and factional tactics.

The forms in which the fate of the world has been shifting since the war change rapidly and already have the system of Allied major powers with their network of tensions and covenants. The United States had entered the system since the Spanish, Japanese, and Chinese wars, without altering it. Today one observes a key to new forms. As a result of the politico-military revival of Africa by France, which is supported by the American Negroes with substantially different intentions, and that of Asia by Bolshevism, the large tract of land suddenly seems to be of primary importance, and sea-related decisions, which were always English in some way and whose absolute control was England's strength, will see the fleet become useless as a result of control of the coasts from the hinterland. South Africa, as the fall of Smuts proves, has recognised its prospects. India, with Russian or Japanese enlightenment, is also about to enter the picture. And the world of Islam, which is completely inland and today pervades the block of land from Morocco to China, has received a spiritual impulse with the World War, which makes possible every kind of surprise we have not known since Genghis Khan.

But the fate of Asia cannot be separated from that of Russia. With the symbolic transfer of its capital from Petersburg to Moscow, Russia has reversed the step that Peter the Great had taken: to establish itself as a European power, to make the great ambassadorial posts in the Western states the centre of Russian politics, and Asia as a means to European ends. Today, the reverse applies. Bolshevism, although in the original form was of Western European origin and structure, could not be quite clear about it.[84] But it is finished with the death of Lenin. This *Caesaric* figure, the most important since Rhodes, always lived under the idea of entertaining a secret army in all the Western states through the quiet work of the Communist organisations in place of the Czar's ambassadors, which replaced the dream of Alexander I of the Holy Alliance under Russian protection with a revolution under the

Soviet star. With Lenin's death, the *nimbus* of the ideal is over, not just the personality that realised it. All the more so since the economic forms of the ideal, despite the flow of blood, have completely failed, and the immense territory is no longer to be saved from a new catastrophe, not least because of the accelerated return to private property and business. In the peasantry of the Russian and Asian earth, from the Vistula to the borders of India and China, over which all great civilisations have so far glided like shadows, there is a religious fervour, half Christian Orthodox, half Bolshevist, of their very essence barely conscious, and out of this may one day emerge the great apparition of a tremendous onslaught from Asia. Thus the diplomatic goals and hopes of the world will be up-ended. Perhaps one day the holy revolution will break out as bloody as the Red one once did. The example of Baron von Ungern-Sternberg shows how small a means is needed of mobilising Asia in a form against which there is no resistance. And is it different given the deep excitement in Islam? Will there appear a true *Khalifan* who does not need to fight for his recognition, because suddenly no one questions his calling?

The practicality of the idea of a revolution almost disappeared from the thinking of the revolutionaries. The standing armies were generally considered a weapon against which any resistance was meaningless. The war, however, has shown how limited the effect of this weapon can be within our cities, and it has also changed the soul of the soldier, who today has political convictions. In addition, the paramount importance of air and submarine weapons, with their very small number of crews, is changing the question. Radicalism is now revolutionary again in all countries and has very definite ideas about using force. It also has his own country-to-country diplomacy, the very existence of which forces major politics into new forms. Inner France faces the choice between chauvinism and syndicalism; there is no doubt about that. Outward failures and the destruction of the triumphal mood of 1918 means deciding whether to dare to lead Black troops against White workers. Every country knows similar questions today. The coup d'état and the dictatorship are today integral parts in the style of political action, all the more so since they are compatible with the preservation of parliamentary forms, even the English.

But with this, the decision moves from problems of form into the

presence and desire of strong personalities. Soviet Russia was Lenin, South Africa was Rhodes, Mussolini is Italy. No parliament, no party, no army today has the decisions in its own hands. They are everywhere and exclusively in the existence or non-existence of individual men, their personal decisions, ideas and goals.[85] Limits such as even in Bismarck's time no longer exist. This is the view that even the smallest country possesses.

---

1 Unquestioned authority of the papacy.

2 Spengler is stating that the parties changed loyalties towards the Reich and the war-effort according to how it would serve their party interests.

3 Rudolf von Bennigson, parliamentarian and leader of the National Liberal Party. Bismarck sought to bring him into Cabinet, but this was opposed by Kaiser Wilhelm I.

4 The Catholic party was called the Centre Party.

5 All of these traits were centred in Israel Helphand (a.k.a. Parvus), who combined Marxism and political wheeler-dealing with financial speculation, war-profiteering and a conspicuously opulent lifestyle.

6 The influence of the traditional landed interests of the *junkers* was replaced with that of financial speculators.

7 Successor to the National Liberal Party, its most noted member was Gustav Stresemann, chancellor and foreign minister in the Weimar Republic.

8 Thermidor refers to the coup of 1794 against the Committee of Public Safety led by Robespierre, which had maintained the "Reign of Terror" in Jacobin France. The new regime, The Directory, sought to stabilise France. *Thermidor* became a widely used term among revolutionaries when referring to a regime that moderates a revolution; hence, Trotsky referred to Stalinist Russia as "Thermidor" in reversing many of the original Bolshevik policies. Spengler, despite his loathing of the "Revolution" that inaugurated the Weimar epoch, is just as scathing of the period he saw as Germany's "Thermidor" because it lacked decision and aim. Spengler examines at length the analogous situation between Weimar Germany and the period of Revolutionary France where The Directorate overthrew the Jacobins. Spengler questions whether there was an improvement, and likewise whether Germany's change of directions from Social Democrats to Centrists will see an improvement, or even more chaos and corruption, while the clamour of the *volkisch* Right, the noisiest among whom were the Hitlerites, is seen as inadequate for the tasks ahead. He concludes that what is needed is a leadership stratum of exceptional abilities. Spengler is calling for a new aristocracy, and a system that cultivates the best in government. He sees democracies under the name of "freedom of the people" as being a façade for the nepotism of parties and the rule of high finance.

9 This became evident with the failure of the Hitler Putsch in Bavaria.

10 Spengler is here presumably referring to the Hitler movement, which he clearly

regarded as lacking political maturity in its zeal to crush the Weimar regime.

11 Spengler's note: And, by the way, how small, shallow, limited, and unworthy is the English sentence, "My country, right or wrong!" In Germany it is: "Jews out!" A mere negation, completely ignorant of the fact that the most dangerous anti-German traits, the penchant for internationalist and pacifist enthusiasm, the hatred for authority and power are deeply rooted in the German nature. Members of one's own race are always more dangerous than those of a stranger, who, even as a minority, must prefer adaptation if given a serious choice. The English instinct does that, and with great success: every stranger is recognised as an Englishman, if he fights for the greatness of England with his talents, means and relations.

12 An allusion to anti-Semitic condemnation of Jews in finance.

13 Attempted coup by royalists forces in Paris, aided by *jeunesse dorée*. The Government was forced to call on former Jacobin forces for help. As a military officer it was Napoleon's decisive action that saved the regime and set him on his course as ruler of France.

14 That is to say, Italy had adopted the 'Prussian socialism' of statecraft over economics, duty over faction and self-interest.

15 William Pitt the Elder (1708-1778), William Pitt the Younger (1759-1806); both served as prime ministers of Britain.

16 The control of parliaments by speculative finance.

17 Spengler was stating that under such a meritocracy there still needs to be sufficient numbers of competent civil servants; rather than a hierarchy that can be easily diminished at the top.

18 One might ask whether this moral authority of the British Monarchy was finally destroyed with the forced abdication of King Edward VIII in 1936? Was it the means by which self-interested cabals served notice on the Throne that regal prerogatives could no longer be tolerated in the era of democratic corruption and high finance?

19 A "German" type had not developed.

20 The legend of the Roman guard who would not leave his post because he had not been relieved of his guard duty.

21 Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835) philosopher, government official, diplomat and linguist whose theories on education were adopted by Prussia. He was a product of the Liberal "Enlightenment."

22 Spengler is again referring to the recitation of the Latin Classics.

23 Carl Peters (1856-1918) explorer, colonial administrator, and founder of the Society for German Colonisation. He played a major role in the German colonisation of Africa, and had much experience with British life.

24 Geroge Dehio, noted German art historian.

25 By which Spengler means instinct and character.

26 School leaving examination.

27 This is a repudiation by Spengler of the notion of universal human rights, of concepts of law supposedly applicable to all peoples, from Swedes to Kalahari Bushmen. The French Revolution sought a universal code in the "rights of man and the citizen," and those who could not be equalised were exterminated *en masse*; the American Republic attempted to codify universal laws and today more than ever seeks to impose their concepts of democracy and "human rights" on the entire world, with mass bombings if required. During Spengler's time the League of Nations attempted to impose universal laws. During our own time there have been enacted the United Nations Charter, and the U.N. Declaration on Human Rights, and a multitude of other universal laws, "declarations," and "covenants." Often the imposition of these "universal laws" serve as a façade for geopolitical power, including the seizure of a nation's resources, as in South Africa, Iraq or Serbia.

28 The Imperial Reichtsag (Diet) at Worms, 1495, legislated for the reform of the laws of the Holy Roman Empire.

29 Rudolf Sohm, *Institutionen des römischen rechts* ["Institutions of Roman Law, "1888] S. 170. Unt. d. Abdl. II, S. 88 ff.

30 Compilation of civil law.

31 Elected magistrate of the Roman Republic.

32 Official dealing with law suits.

33 The Germanic concept of "property" was not one primarily of economics but of the expression of one's sense of belonging, of freedom, and of one's creativity, including the perpetuity of one's descendants on property handed down through generations. This Germanic "socialism" sees private property in completely different terms to the materialistic conceptions of both Marxist and Free Trade doctrines. Spengler wrote of this spiritual basis of property: "There is one other thing that belongs of necessity to a ripe Culture. This is *property*, the thought of which causes delirious outbursts of envy and hatred from the vulgar-minded. Property, that is, in the originals sense: old and permanent possession, inherited from forefathers or accrued over long years by the heavy and devoted work of the owner and cherished and increased for his sons and grandsons. Wealth is not the mere background of superiority, but above all, the *result* and *expression* of it, a function not only of the way in which it was acquired, but also the ability needed to shape and use it as a true cultural element. …" (*The Hour of Decision*, Knopf, 1963, pp. 97-98). Of the organic relationship between property and family, Spengler stated: "When the notion of property crumbles away, the meaning of the family fades into nothingness." (Ibid., 221).

34 Complete body of laws based on Roman civil law.

35 "To a willing person, no harm is done." In common law, one who chooses a course, knowing the risk, cannot make any claims for injury.

36 Spengler is referring to the difference between productive capital and speculative capital, between that which is bound to a nation and therefore subjected to the interests of a people through the state; and capital that is global, and can be moved about the world as stocks, bonds, currencies, and credit,

controlled by those – often anonymous - who have no bonds with a land or a people, and whose only loyalty is to money.

37 Spengler is calling for the protection of cultural and intellectual rights as hereditable property.

38 Introduced amidst inflationary chaos in 1923 to stabilise the currency.

39 The infamous inflation.

40 Zimbabwe might have succeeded.

41 Spengler is referring to money as the means of exchanging goods, rather than exchanging the goods themselves (barter).

42 Spengler's note: All the original types of money, such as the talent, pound, and mark, are in weight units, according to which grain as well as gold or silver could be measured.

43 Spengler is referring to credit, and distinguishing credit from money, credit being the method by which most transactions are made, and not reliant of actual production; therefore credit becomes a commodity rather than merely a means of exchange, and is hence open to speculation and usury.

44 That is, there is seldom a demand for actual products or commodities, so credit can continue being issued well beyond any original productive or commodity backing that it might have had.

45 These sources of revenue include usury and currency speculation.

46 One might think of the shaving of gold and silver from coins, or the deterioration of the contents of ale or bread; serious crimes against the guild codes of honour of merchants and craftsmen in Medieval Europe, while usury was regarded as among the most loathsome of practices, confined largely to Jewish lenders. Such codes of honour were undermined with the gradual decline of the guilds and their final elimination by the French Revolution.

47 While a banknote has for centuries been a promise to pay by being redeemable in gold on presentation, such what are in effect "i.o.u's" are seldom presented in exchange for a demand on gold reserves, either to a state or a private banker. Hence bankers can operate on what is called a "fractional reserve" of gold or other assets. It is when there is a panic and a run on the banks that the façade falls.

48 *Assignats* (1789-1796), paper money put into circulation by the French National Assembly during the revolutionary era, on the verge of bankruptcy, backed by confiscated Church and Crown properties.

49 The International Economic Conference held at Genoa, among international financial experts, where it was intended to secure a loan to enable Germany to pay its war reparations.

50 Gold and Discount Bank, a subsidiary of the Reichsbank founded in 1924 to support German exports by financing raw material imports through the issuing of shares to foreign banks. The objective was to pay reparations, and the means was to borrow from the Bank of England.

51 The world banking crisis occurred in 1931.

52 Morgan Guaranty Trust, the Wall Street banking giant.

53 Spengler: In order, as American senator La Follette wrote, to ensure that the financial obligations borne by the banks are paid up to the last penny, even if the United States government does not get back a dollar of the sums it loaned to the Allies during the war.

54 Spengler is here referring to the Dawes Plan, intended to extract reparations from Germany, so that in turn Allied powers could repay the $10 million war loans borrowed from the USA. The plan included the supervision by the Allied powers of German economic policy, and the Reichsmark would be adopted as the new currency. Foreign banks were to loan Germany $200 million for economic stimulus. The loan was floated on the U.S. market by J. P. Morgan. The Office of the Historian of the U.S. State Department states of this: "Over the next four years, U.S. banks continued to lend Germany enough money to enable it to meet its reparation payments to countries such as France and the United Kingdom. These countries, in turn, used their reparation payments from Germany to service their war debts to the United States." https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/dawes What we see here is the parasitic character of international finance: With German economic policy brought under the control of advisers from Wall Street, bankers make loans to Germany so that it can continue its reparations primarily to France and Britain, which in turn are enabled to "service" (that is, pay the interest, not the principal) their war loans to the USA; loans moreover which would have emanated from Wall Street originally. At the centre is the financial house of J. P. Morgan. This is the situation that Spengler was describing.

55 Hidden property taxes.

56 Spengler here described the working of global speculative capital that in our present computer age has far surpassed a process that Spengler observed was taking place during the era of the telegraph. Spengler describes the differences between the rootless, anonymous capital of the stock and currency speculators, and the productive entrepreneurs who were intimately associated with their enterprises, that existed as tangible properties and objects. The Left attack the latter, while even ostensible conservatives were imbued with a spirit akin to Marxism, and adopted tax policies that were designed to undermine productive capital, while speculative capital has remained, due to its global, rootless and anonymous character, untouchable. In *The Decline of The West*, *The Hour of Decision*, and *Prussianism and Socialism*, Spengler pointed out that there has always been a kinship between the Left and speculative capital; that both attack property as an expression of personal creativity.

57 The year of the French Revolution.

58 That is, one's "wealth" expressed in one's possessions and property; enviously condemned not as an expression of personal creativity but of "exploitation.'

59 For Marx such former workers and artisans who became petty-bourgeoisie were vehemently denounced as "reactionists" (*The Communist Manifesto*) who only

became useful to the dialectical process if they were reduced back to the urban proletariat.

60 Property.

61 Under Napoleon, commerce became the servant of the state and of High Policy, not the master. This included the reform of the banking system, which also subordinated money and credit to the state.

62 The conflict between speculative, rootless finance that is able to avoid taxation and creative, personal enterprise that bears the tax burden.

63 The result of a tax and fiscal policy based on the burdening of the creative entrepreneur, while leaving high finance beyond reach, impoverishes the creative stratum, while at the same time achieving nothing for the worker. The result is by more subtle means the same as that of Bolshevism: the elimination of the creative stratum and the creation of an impoverished mass, behind which remains the power of high finance. Again, we see how Spengler could state in *The Decline of The West*, *The Hour of Decision*, and elsewhere, how high finance and pseudo-socialism worked in tandem, and how private property as an expression of creativity and culture, is actually genuine "socialism," or what he called "Prussian socialism." In the Anglophone states, this policy of "creeping socialism" was called "Fabianism," backed by high financiers such as Sir Ernst Cassel, and would be primarily achieved through taxation. This is what Spengler next described with his allusion to Lloyd George's inheritance tax.

64 Erich Rabbenthge, *Verfall oder Rettung*! ("Decay or Rescue!", 1923).

65 This will-to-power over nature and science is the "Faustian" imperative which Spengler defined, especially in *The Decline of The West*, as the "soul" of Western man.

66 In ascribing the theory of surplus value as the primary factor in economics, Marx reduced the concept of work to an animalistic impulse devoid of personality. Hitherto, work has been a "calling." When man becomes nothing more than "matter in motion," devoid of anything higher, so does his economic activity become an appendage of his stomach, digestive and excretory organs rather than a manifestation of his soul, and even the great works of art, music and architecture are nothing more.

67 Marx did not distinguish between creative, entrepreneurial capital, and speculative capital. His references to financial capital, for example, in *Das Kapital*, is scant. Hence, the Left has been useless as a fighting organisation or even a doctrine in resisting speculative capital, and the Marxist fixation with the "bourgeoisie" has served to deflect attention away from the actual class of parasitic financiers. Of these Marx states nothing in *The Communist Manifesto*, his clarion call to the proletariat of the world, yet vehemently condemns as "reactionists" artisans who sought to revive the pre-capitalist guilds and crafts. Conversely Free Trade was an essential part of the historical dialectic.

68 The French Revolution, the seedbed of the modern Left and of Liberalism, outlawed the guilds in 1791, and imposed its prohibition on the states it invaded, such as The Netherlands, and parts of Germany and Italy.

69 Marx predicted that there would be increasing impoverishment, and that even large elements of the bourgeoisie would become proletarianised.

70 The German Social Democratic Party, the largest in Europe.

71 While it might seem strange that Spengler, a Conservative, would allude to the Soviet Union as an example to be studied, this was not unusual among ideologues of the German "Conservative Revolution." Among this milieu those such as Ernst Nietkisch, Ernst Jünger, Moeller van der Bruck, Ernst von Salomon, and even Count Graf Ernst zu Reventlow, foreign policy adviser to the National Socialist party, advocated an alliance with the USSR against the democratic-plutocracies, in the spirit of the Treaty of Rapallo. *Arplan*, an organisation for the study of Soviet Russia, included not only Communists, but a third of the membership comprised those from the Right, interested in the autarchic planned economy of Stalin, who had reversed Trotsky's cultivation of ties with Western industry and finance. (See Bolton, "Jünger and National Bolshevism,' in T. Southgate (ed.) *Jünger: Thoughts and Perspectives* Vol. 11, Black Front Press, London, 2012).

72 That is, by Marx.

73 Spengler is calling for the development of a technical aristocracy from among the workers; a matter he addresses in the concluding pages of *The Decline of The West* in relation to the machine.

74 The impersonality of both corporate ownership and socialist bureaucracy.

75 To appreciate the strength of the French position after the Great War, it should be recalled that France maintained the instability of the international financial situation by its intransigent demands on Germany; the reparations and occupation of the Ruhr vexed the other victors, who sought solutions such as the U.S. Dawes and Young Plans.

76 Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1871; the catalyst for the birth of a unified German state.

77 A battle in Piedmont in 1800 between the forces of Napoleon Bonaparte and those of Austria. The French victory solidified Napoleon's position as First Consul of France since his recent coup d'etat.

78 French embankment fortification on the left bank of the Rhine occupied by France after the Great War.

79 An alliance between Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania, supported by France, 1920-1921.

80 The "Fashoda Incident,"1898, on the White Nile, when British and French forces met in Fashoda, France aiming to control the Upper Nile basin and prevent British control of the Sudan. While war did not ensue, the French backed down after diplomatic pressure, and were humiliated.

81 Charles Mangin, noted officer during World War I. Prior to this he fought in the African colonies and especially the French Sudan. He advocated the idea of *Force Noire* (Black Forces) and wrote a book by that name, promoting Blacks in the French army. In his last book, *The Hour of Decision*, Spengler warned that the coloured races would rebel against the White empires, having seen White

divisiveness during the World War, and that this coloured world revolt would be led by Bolshevism.

82 Black troops were among those sent by France to occupy the Ruhr in 1920. It was widely viewed as a means of further humiliating the Germans, and caused international outrage, especially, interestingly from today's perspective (when the Left pose as champions of the coloured races against "White privilege") from Socialists. For example the British Socialist newspaper *The Daily Herald* was in the forefront of the condemnation, running headlines such as "Black Scourge in Europe. Sexual Horror Let Loose by France on Rhine, Disappearance of Young French Girls." *The Daily Herald* regarded the Black troops as docile tools of capitalism. Edmund Morel of the Independent Labour Party, published a widely distributed and translated pamphlet, *The Black Horror on the Rhine*, in which he called the "introduction of 50,000 coloured troops in the centre of white Europe a crime against the whole of Europe." (Philippa Levine, *Prostitution, Race & Politics: Policing Venereal Disease in the British Empire*, London, 2003, 169-170).

83 The states of the "Little Entente."

84 Spengler is referring to Marxism as essentially a product of the 19th century English economic *Zeitgeist*.

85 The Age of *Caesarism* a Spengler saw it. Even the liberal-democracies consciously sought to present their party leaders, especially Churchill, de Gaulle and Roosevelt, as being in this mould.

Is World Peace Possible?

A cabled reply to an American poll

First published in *Cosmopolitan*, January, 1936.

This article is a reply to a poll of notable personages undertaken by *International-Cosmopolitan*. The question put was: "Will it finally be brought home to us all that it is human nature itself, with its racial antagonisms, economic rivalries, and territorial squabbles, that will keep plaguing us forever into wars? Or is there reason to believe that someday the people of the earth may abolish wholesale killing and enjoy their lives in security and peace?" Replies were had from nineteen recipients, including Eleanor Roosevelt, Amelia Earhart, Dean Inge, Havelock Ellis, and Mahatma Gandhi. This was Spengler's final public statement.

- § -

The question whether world peace will ever be possible can only be answered by someone familiar with world history. To be familiar with world history means, however, to know human beings as they have been and always will be. There is a vast difference, which most people will never comprehend, between viewing future history as it will be and viewing it as one might like it to be. Peace is a desire, war is a fact; and history has never paid heed to human desires and ideals.

Life is a struggle involving plants, animals, and humans. It is a struggle between individuals, social classes, peoples, and nations, and it can take the form of economic, social, political, and military competition. It is a struggle for the power to make one's will prevail, to exploit one's advantage, or to advance one's opinion of what is just or expedient. When other means fail, recourse will be taken time and again to the ultimate means: violence. An individual who uses violence can be branded a criminal, a class can be called revolutionary or traitorous, a people bloodthirsty. But that does not

alter the facts. Modern world-communism calls its wars “uprisings,” imperialist nations describe theirs as “pacification of foreign peoples.” And if the world existed as a unified state, wars would likewise be referred to as “uprisings.” The distinctions here are purely verbal.[1]

Talk of world peace is heard today only among the white peoples, and not among the much more numerous coloured races. This is a perilous state of affairs. When individual thinkers and idealists talk of peace, as they have done since time immemorial, the effect is always negligible. But when whole peoples become pacifistic it is a symptom of senility. Strong and unspent races are not pacifistic. To adopt such a position is to abandon the future, for the pacifist ideal is a static, terminal condition that is contrary to the basic facts of existence.

As long as man continues to evolve there will be wars. Should the white peoples ever become so tired of war that their governments can no longer incite them to wage it, the earth will inevitably fall a victim to the coloured men, just as the Roman Empire succumbed to the Teutons. Pacifism means yielding power to the inveterate nonpacifists. Among the latter there will always be white men – adventurers, conquerors, leader-types – whose following increases with every success. If a revolt against the whites were to occur today in Asia, countless whites would join the rebels simply because they are tired of peaceful living.

Pacifism will remain an ideal, war a fact. If the white races are resolved never to wage war again, the coloured will act differently and be rulers of the world.[2]

---

1 How prescient this is might be adduced by the wars in our time fought in the name of “world peace,” and “against terrorism,” as a pretext for some geopolitical objective.

2 This was a theme of Spengler’s book *The Hour of Decision*. The prospect of a “coloured world revolution” led by Bolshevism, discussed in *The Hour of Decision*, two decades later had passed from Russia to China. The antagonism between both, bypassing any feigned feelings of “Communist fraternity,” took on racial antagonism from both sides, China appealing to the coloured world against the USSR as “white imperialists.”